

☞ The Fabulous tales of
Esop the Phrygian, Compiled
moſte eloquently in Scottiſhe
Metre by Maſter Robert
Henriſon, & now lately
Engliſhed.

Every tale Moralized moſt aptly to
this preſent time, worthy
to be read.



Imprinted at London by
Richard Smith,

Anno. 1577.

The bookes passport.

THat man neare wrote
whose wryte pleased all mens mynd,
Nor I as nowe
thinke no such place to finde:
For fyndfault he
him selfe that no good can,
By slaunderous tounge,
doth hinder many a man,
Which els would wryte
to many a ones content:
(But Bayard I)
cares not for being shent.

Goe therfore booke,
to eche mans eye to vewe:
To wyse and sadde,
and all the carping crewe.
The wyfest sort,
will well accept my skill:
Sir Momus mates,
takes all good things as ill.
And he that likes not
this as I do say:
Here is the dore
and there furth right the way.

FINIS.



To his worshipfull and espe-
cial good friend Master Richard Stoneley Esquire
one of the foure tellers of the Q. Maiesties receyt
of the Eschecker, and Receiver of the first fruites
and tenthes to her Maiestie. R. S. wisheth
encrease of Worshipp to the
glorie of God.



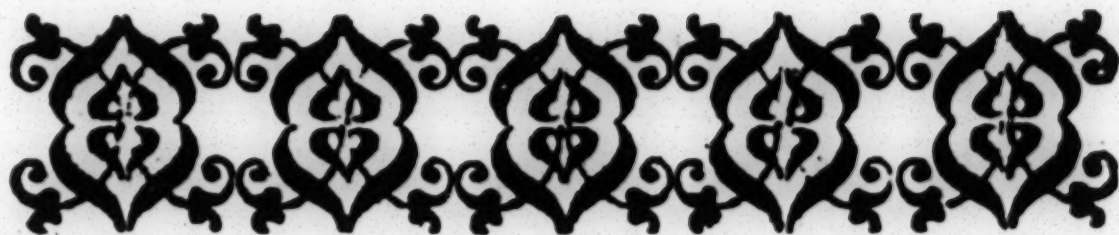
Owrshipfull Sir, calling to my
munde, that great good will that
you haue borne vnto me and mine,
since the time of my first acquaint-
tance with you: except I should be
to forgetfull and vngratefull, I must
remember you, and be as thanke-
full, as my poore abilitie will serue.

But the woorme of good will still gnawing my mynde
thereto at last, all daintie meates and viandes set aside,
which are common remembrances, yet vayne and soone
forgotte, but whyle they are a eating. There came vnto
my hande a Scottishe Pamphlet, of the Fabulous Tales
of Esope, a worke, sir as I thinke, in that language wherein
it was written, verie eloquent and full of great inuention.
And no doubt you shall finde some smatch thereof, al-
though very rudely I haue obscured the Authour, and
hauing two yeres since turned it into Englishe, I haue
kept it vnpublished, hoping some els of greater skill
would not haue let it lyen dead. But whether most men
haue that nation in derision for their hollowe hearts and
vngratefull mindes to this countrey alwayes had (a peo-
ple verie subiect to that infection) or thinking scorne of
the Authour or first inuenter, let it passe, as friuolous and
vaine matter: yet in my conceite there is learning for all

THE EPISTLE.

Sorts of people worthy the memorie. Therefore knowing not howe by any meanes to let you vnderstand my good will towarde you, but by this meanes, at last putting all feare aside, I boldly present this vnto your worship, hoping that at vacant time when other matters of great importance be layde aside, that you will not deine to recreate your minde with this trifle, where you shall finde doctrine both pleasant and profitable, and hoping as oft as you looke on this booke you will thinke on me, accept this poore Persian water or lewes mite, which in so doing I care not for all the scoffers and taunters, which will do nought themselves nor suffer others to do that may pleasure or profit the posteritie. I craue of God to encrease you with worldly Worshippe to his pleasure.

*Yours at commandemens
Richard Smith.*



The argument betweene

Esope and the Translatour.

Late passing thorough Paules Churchyarde,
aside I cast mine eye,
And ere I wist, to me appearde
Sir Esope by and by,

Apparelled both braue and fine,
after the Scottish guide,
I stooode then still with ardent eyne,
I viewde him twise or thise.

Behold quoth he, now am I here,
and faine would meete some one,
To speake English that would me leare.
with that quoth I anone:

Why English Sir, you speake right well,
what more would you require?
Yea thats in prose: my tales to tell
in verse I do desire.

Alasse I am not for your tourne,
ye must repayre vnto
The Innes of Court and Chauncery,
where learned haue to do.

At

The Argument.

At Helicon I neuer came,
the way I do not knowe,
(God Pan his seruant sir I am,
and duetie to him owe.)

On oaten pipe we still do play,
thats all that he teach can,
Of other loze he takes no way
this Growtnole rusticke Pan.

Mineruas impes they Orpheus keepe,
in Musicke they delite,
To serue your turne before they sleepe,
in verse to make you dite,

Your Fables wise and eloquent,
with phrases feate and fine,
Endewed with Apollo gent,
that passeth Muse of mine.

Content your selfe quoth Esope than,
do thus much once for me,
To learne me verse so as ye can,
my selfe as playne as ye.

They do not care for Scottish bookes,
they list not looke that way:
But if they would but cast their lookes,
some time when they do play,

Some

Somewhat to see perhaps they might,
that then would like them wel,
To teach them treade their way aright,
to blisse, from paines of hel.

Farewel good Phrygian Poet now,
I may no more sojourne,
(If not sayth Esope) then adew,
Int Scotlande Ile returne.

May rather will I venture hard
and bring your minde to passe,
If that I gaine to my rewarde
King Midas eares of Asse,

And haue a thousand ill reports
still tumbling downe on me,
Than this to want vnto all sorts
and view of euery eye.

Therefore haue here good reader now,
my rurall skillesse skill,
I aske no more but this of you,
one ynche of your good will,
Which it to graunt as I do craue,
thats euen as much as I would haue.

His

Orpheus once did walke abroad,
 mong fragrant flowers tenceace his glee,
 To set his harpe in one accorde,
 in tune to make his strings agree,
 Whereby was heard such pleasant sounde,
 that all the woodes therof rebound.

And playing thus in pleasant shade,
 wilde beastes and men to him did come:
 With musicke strayte them stones he made,
 his gift was such, them to transfoyme:
 He fell a sleepe, and o he wooke,
 in hand a while his harpe I tooke.

This Scottish Orpheus I meane,
 that Esops tales hath made to gree
 In Rethoricke both trim and cleane,
 that all my wittes bereft hath hee:
 His harpe alas I make to tarre,
 and both his name and mine do marre.
 But since I made them disagree,
 leaue me the blame the Laurel he.

FINIS.

The Contentes of the Booke.

- 1 **T**he tale of the grossehead Chamtclere the cocke, and the pretious stone : wherin is shewed the wanton lincs of lasciuious maydes, with the litle cart we haue of the precious giftes of God. Fol. 3
- 2 The tale of the plaine country mouse and daintie towner mouse, wherin is displayed our daintie citizens sciues, which can keepe them selues in no mediocritie. Fol. 7
- 3 A pleasant tale of the Cocke and the Foxe, howe willy beguiles himselfe, wherin is to be scene the life of the craftie circumuincitours of the simple men, and yet some time howe they meete with their match. Fol. 16
- 4 The pleasant tale howe this false dissembling God made his confession to the hypocrite fryer, Wolfe swaye skath, that sheweth the great hypocrisse of the Popish prelacie. Fol. 24
- 5 The Rhetoricall tale of the soune & heyre of the forsaide God or Foxe, called father swarres, also the parliament of beastes holden by the Lion, which sheweth our duetie at all assemblies commaunded by our Prince or Superiours, & howe we ought to behaue our selues. 31
- 6 The woofull tale of the plaintife dogge, against the poore shepe before Justice Wolfe, notably shewing the abuses of such Courtes where money & might maketh the poore to begge. Fol. 44
- A tale of the Lion & the Mouse, with the authors prologu: before, shewing what reuerence we owe to our Prince person, yea though he be dead, and howe we

The Table.

not ought to venture our liues to do them good.

51

8 The notable tale of the preaching of the Swallowe, containing the office of a preacher and howe they ought to warne vs of Satan his trappes, lest we be caught in his net. fol. 62

9 The mery tale of the Wolfe that sayne would haue had the neckeherring of Samon, through the wyles of the fore that beguiled the carrier, and of their hard adventures. fol. 73

10 The excellent tale of the wylde Laurence fore that beguiled the couetous craftie Wolf, where is shewed depe dissembling friendship, & howe hyberie beareth sway. 86

11 The mery tale of the Wolfe and the Weather, where is painted out the lussy blouds, come by of loth degree by vnlawfull meanes, and apparching them selues in their braverie, wil giue no place to their betters. 94

12 The woofull tale of the cruell Wolfe and the innocent Lambe, laying before our sight the bloud thirstie tyrants and oppressours of poore helpeles men. fol. 101

13 The tale of the woofull end of the Daddocke and the Housle, shewing the well deserved ende of the holowe harted dissemblers, and howe God in the ende doth requite them. fol. 107

Lastly the translators Epilogue, shewing that in a deformed creature God may and wil set forth his glorie.



The Argument or Prologue.

Though fained fables of auncient poetry,
Be not all grounded vpon truth (what than)
Their politick termes in sweete Rethorick
Right pleasaunt are vnto the eare of man,
And eke the cause that they first began,
Was to reprove the hole misliuing,
(Of man) by figure of some other thing.

In like maner thorough the borderous erth,
(So it be labored with great diligence)
Springs floures and coine to our great myght,
Holsome and good to mans sustenance.
So doth spring, some morall sweete sentence,
Out of the subtile dye of Poetry:
To good purpose, who can it well apply.

The nuttes shell though it be hard and tough,
Holdes the kernell whiche is most delectable.
(So lyes their doctrine wise inough,
And full of fruite, vnder a fained fable.)
And wise men sayes, it is right profitable,
Amongs earnest, to mingle merrey sport,
To recreat the spyte, and make the time be short.

Further, the bowe that is ay bent,
Seemes vnsmart and dul on the string,
So doth the minde that is ay diligent,
In earnest thoughts and great studying,
With sad maters some myrrinesse to ming.
Accordeth well thus Escopie sayd iwis,
Dulcius arident l. ria picta locis.

Of this autho: my maysters with your leue,
Submitting me to your correction.

In mother tounge, out of Latine to proue
 To make some maner of translation,
 Nought of my self, for vayne presumption,
 But by request, and precept of a Lord,
 Of whom the name I neede not recorde.

In homely language and in termes rude,
 I needes must wryte: for why of Eloquence,
 Nor Rhetorike, I neuer vnderstode.
 Therefore meekely I pray your reuerence,
 If that ye finde through my negligence,
 To be lacking, or els superfluous,
 Correct it at your willes gracious.

My Authoꝛ in his fables telles how
 That brutall beasts spake and vnderstode,
 And to good purpose dispute and argue.
 And sillogisme propone and eke conclude,
 Put in example, and in similitude,
 How many men in operation,
 Are like to beastes in condition.

No maruell then, though man be like a beast,
 Which loues ay carnall and foule delight,
 That shame cannot him pluck backe nor arrest,
 But takes all his lust and appetite,
 And that thowow custome and dayly rite,
 Sinne in their mindes is so fast rooted,
 That they into brutall beastes are transformed.

This noble clerke Glose, as I haue tolde,
 With great inuention, as poete Laureate,
 By figure wrote his booke: for he nought would
 Lacke the disdaync of hie, nor low estate.
 And to begin, first of a Cock he wate,
 Seeking his meate, which fond a precious stone,
 Of whom the fable ye shall heare anon.

The tale of the Grosehead

chauncleare the Cock, and
precious Stone.

A Cocke sometime with feathers fresh and gay
Right cant and crows, albeit he was but poore,
Flew forth on dughill early on a day,
To get his dinner, set was all his cure.
Scraping the mucke, there by aduventure,
He found a Jasper stone, right pretious,
Was casten forth by sweeping of the house.

As damosels wanton and insolent,
That faine would play, and on the streete be scerie,
To sweeping of the house they take no tent
They care nothing so the floze be cleene,
Jewels are lost, as sometime hath bene scene
Upon the floze, and so swept forth anone,
Peradventure so was this pretious stone.

So marueling vpon this stone (quoth he)
O gentle Jasp: O ritche and noble thing,
Though I thee finde, yet art thou not for me,
Thou art a Jewell for a Lord or King.
Pitty it were thou should lie in this midding,
Be buried this amongs this mucke and mold
And thou so fayre and worth so much gold.

It is pittie I should thee finde, for why?
Thy great vertue nor yet thy colour cleere,

It may me nother extoll, nor magnify:
 And thou to me may make but little cheere,
 To great Lords though thou be lief and deere,
 I loue farre better things of lesse auayle
 As dras or Corne to fill my tunc intrayle.

I had leuer go scrape here with my nayles,
 Amongst this muck and looke my liues foode,
 As dras, or corne, small woymes, or snayles,
 Or any meate would do my stomacke good:
 Than of Jasper stoues a mighty multitude.
 And thou againe vpon the same wise,
 For lesse auayle thou may me now dispise.

Thou hast no corne: and thereof haue I neede,
 Thy colour doth but comfort to the sight.
 And that is not inough my wombe to feede,
 (For the wise sayes) looking things are light.
 I would haue some meate, get it if I might.
 For hungry men may not liue on looks:
 Had I dry bread, I compt not for no cookes.

Where should thou make thy habitation?
 Where should thou dwell but in a royall toure?
 Where should thou sitte but on a kings corone,
 Exalted in worship and in great honoꝛ?
 Rise gentell Jasp, of all stones the floure,
 Out of this dunghill and passe where thou should be
 Thou cares not for me, nor I for thee.
 Leuing this Jewell loe vpon the ground,

To seeke his meate this Cock his wayes went,
But when oz how, oz by whom it was found,
As now I set to holde no argument.

But of the inward sentence, and intent:
Of this (as mine Authoz here doth wright)
I shall reherse in rude and homely dite.

This pretious Jasp, had properties seuen,
The first, of colour it was maruelous:
Parte like the fire, and parte like the heauen,
It makes a man stoute and victorious,
Preserues also, from chaunces perillous.
Who hath this stone, shall haue good hap to speede,
Noz fire, noz water, he needeth not to dzed.

The Morall.

This gentle Jasp right different of hue
Betokenith perfect prudence and cunning,
Dyate with many deedes of vertue,
More excellent, than any earthly thing
Whiche makes men in honoz for to ring,
Happy and stoute to winne the victorie,
Of all vices and spirituall enmitie.

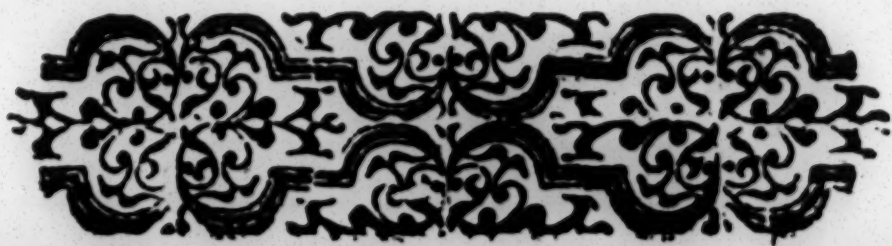
Who may be hardy, ritch, and gracious?
Who can eschue perill and aduenture?
Who can gouerne a Realme, Citty oz House,
Without science, no man I you assure?

It is ritches, that euer shall endure,
 Whiche mothe, noz moyst, noz other rust can treat,
 To mans soule it is eternall meat.

This Cocke desireth moze the simple corne,
 Than any Jaspe, (may till a scale be peere)
 Whiche at science makes a mocke oz scozne,
 And no good can, as little will he leare:
 His hart wambles wile argument to heare,
 As doth a Sow, to whome men for the nones,
 Into hir drasse would throw some pretious stones.

Who is enimie to science and cunning,
 But ignozance that vnderstandeth nought?
 Whiche is so noble, so pretious and so dign,
 That it may not with earthly thing be bought:
 Well were that man of all other that mought
 All his life dayes in perfect study spend,
 To get Science, to keepe him till his end.

But now (alas) that stone is lost and hide,
 We seeke it not, noz please it not to finde,
 Haue we ritches, no better life we bide:
 Of Science though the soule be bare and blinde,
 Of this matter to speake, it were but winde.
 Therefore I cease, and will no further say,
 (Go seeke the Iasp, who will, for there it lay).



The pretty tale of the playne countrey Mousc, and deyntie towne Mousc.

E Sope mine Authoz maketh mention
Of two myse, and they were sisters deere,
Of whome the eldest dwelt in a Citty or Towne:
The other dwelte in the countrey there neere,
Solitary vnder bushe, sometime vnder byer:
Now in the corne, now in other mens food,
As theeves do, that liue by others good.

This rurall Mousc, in the winter tyde
Had hunger, and colde, and also great distresse,
The other Mousc that in the towne can byde,
Was a swoyne brother and made a free Burges,
And had all things toll free, by custome more or lesse,
And freedom had to go where euer she list,
Amongs the cheese in racke, and meale in chist.

One time when she was full, and longed sore,
It came in minde, hir sister for to see,
And where she dwelt, and how hir life she boze,
And how shee farde, vnder the roote of tree:
Bare foote alone, with staffe so goeth shee.
As poore pilgrim, she passeth out of towne,
To seeke hir sister, both oze dale and downe.

Forth many croked wayes, can she walke,
Thro' mosse and moze, thro' banke, bush & byer,
Thus ran she crying, while she came till a balke,

Come forth to me quoth shee, myne owne sister deare,
 Cry peep Anis, with that the House could heare,
 And know byr voyce, as kinswomen will do,
 By very kinde, and forth she came hir to.

The hartie ioy (O God) if you had ferne,
 Betwene these two sisters, when they mette,
 And great loue was shewen them betwene,
 For whiles they laugh, and whyles for ioy they wept;
 Somwhiles kissing sweete, somwhiles in armes reple,
 And thus they fare, while soberd was there mood,
 So soote for soote, vnto the chamber yode.

As I hard say, hit was a simple one,
 Of fog and ferne full feebly was made,
 A homely thing, ouer a stedfast stone,
 Of whiche the ntric, was not hie nor broad,
 And in they went, withouten moze abode,
 Without fler or candle, burnyng bright,
 For commonly, such pickers loues no light.

When they were lodged thus, these silly myce,
 The yongest sister into her buttery glyde,
 And brought forth nuttes and corne in steede of spice,
 If this weare good I aske you here beside,
 The towne House, prompted forth in pryde,
 And sayd sister, is this your dayly foode?
 Why not (quoth she) is not this meate right good?

Nay by my soule I take it but in skorne,
 Madam (quoth she) ye be the moze to blame,

My mother sayd sister, when we were borne,
That I and ye lay both within on wame,
I keepe the rate and custome of my Dame,
And alwayes liues, thus in pouertie,
For landes haue we none in proprietie.

My sayre sister (quoth she) haue me excused,
This rude diet and I cannot accord,
To tender meat my stomake is ap bled,
For whyles I fare aswell as any Lord,
These wither'd pease, and nusses or they be bozd,
Will brake my teeth, & make my wombe ful slender,
Whiche was befoze bled to meates so tender.

Well well sister, (quoth the countrey mouse,)
If it please you such things as ye see there,
Both meate and drinke, my lodging and house,
Shalbe your owne whyles ye remaynen here.
Ye shall it haue with myzth and merry cheare,
And that should make the meases that are rude,
Among friends, right tender and wondrous good.

What pleasure is, in feasts delicate,
The whiche are geuen with a lowzing browe?
A gentle hart is better recreate,
With harty minde, than set to him a kowe.
A modicum, is moze for to allowe,
So that good will be caruer at the dease,
Than costly-fayre and many spiced mease.
For all hir good will, and mery exhortation

THE MONASTICAL FABLES

This Burges mouse had little left to sing,
But heavily she cast hir browes a drowne,
For all the daynties that she could hir bring:
Yet at the last, she sayd halfe in skorning,
Sister this victuall, and your royall feast,
May well suffice vnto a rurall geast.

Let alone this hole, and come now me after,
And I shall to you shew by experience,
That my good Fryday is better than your Ester,
My dishe lickings, is worth your hole expence,
I haue houses more, of great defence,
Of Cat nor trap, twis I haue no drede:
I graunt, quoth she, and on together yee de.

In stubble array thorow grasse and corne:
And vnder bushes pryncly can they creepe,
The eldest was the guyde and went before,
The yonger to hir wayes tooke good keepe:
On night they ran, and on the day can sleepe,
And early in the morning, ere they bliu,
They fand the towne, and meryly went in.

Not farre fro thence into a fayre place,
This Burges brought the sone where they should be,
Without God speede, their lodging there they hase,
Into a spence with victuall great plenty,
Both cheese and butter vpon the shelues he,
And flesh and fish inough, bothe freshe and salt,
And sackes full of meale and eke of malt.

After,

After, when they were disposed to dine,
Without grace they wash, and went to meate.
With all courses that Cookes could devise,
As Mutton and Beef layde in chardgers great:
Pea Lordes fare thus could they counterfeate,
Except one thing, they dranke the water cleare,
In steede of wine, but yet they made good cheere.

With face by cast and mery countenaunce,
The eldest sister spake vnto hir gest,
If that she by reason, fond difference
Betwixt that chamber and hir soze nest:
Pea dame (quoth she) how long wil this last?
For euermore I wote, and longer to,
If it be so, ye are at ease (quoth she).

To all this cheere a banquet forth shee brought,
A plate of grotes and a dishe of meale,
Ote cakes also I trow, she spared nought,
Abundantly about hir soz to deale.
And manfully so, she brought in steede of grill,
A white candle, out of a coffer stale,
In steede of spice to taste their mouths withall.

This made they mery while they might no more,
All hayle all hayle, cried she on he,
Yet after ioy oft times comes matter soze,
And trouble after great prosperitie:
Thus as they sate in all their iolittle
The spencer comes, with keyes in his hand,

Opened

Opened the doze and them at dinner lunde.

They taried not to washe as I suppose,
But on to go who that mought for most winne,
The towne mouse had an hole and in she goes,
Hir sister had no hole to hide hir in,
To see that selly mouse it were great sinne
So desolate there and harde bestead,
For very dzed she fell in towne neare dead.

But as God would it fell an happy case,
The Spencer had no leysure for to hyde,
Nother to seeke nor seach to there ne chase,
But on he went and left the doze vp wide?
This bolde Burges this passing well hath spied,
Out of hir hole she came and cried on hie:
How fare ye sister erle peep where ere ye be.

This rurall mouse, lay flatling on the ground,
For feare of death she was full soze dzedand.
For to hir hart strake many wofull sound,
As in a feuer she trimbled softe and hand,
And when hir sister in such plight her sand,
For very pittie she began to weepe:
So comforted hir with wordes hony and sweete.

Why lie ye thus ryle vp my sister deare?
Come to your meate this petrill is oze past,
The other answered hir with heauy cheare,
I may not eate, so soze I am agast,
I had leuer this soztie dayes to fast,

With water porrage, and to graue beanes or pease,
Than all your feast in this dzead and dease.

With faire treaty yet she made hir ryle,
And to the boord they went, and together sate,
And scantly had they dzonken once or twyse,
When in came Gib hunter, our ioly Cat
And bad Godspeede, the Burges vp with that,
And till hir hole she went as fire of flint,
But Gilbert the other by the backe has hint.

From foote to foote he cast hy? so with pulthes,
Now vp now downe, now suffer hir to creepe
Now would he let her run vnder the rushes
Now would he winke and play with hir bo peep
Thus to the silly mouse he did paynes grete:
Whyles at the last thozow fortune and good hap,
Betwixt a boord and the wall she crap.

And vp in hast behinde the cloth paynted,
She clani so hie that Gilbert might not get hir
There by the cludges craftely she hanged,
Till he was gone, hir cheare was all the better,
So downe she lap when there was none to let her,
And to the Burges mouse lowde can she crie,
Fare well sayze sister thy feastes here I desie.

Thy feastinges are filled all with care,
Thy guyle is good, thend is sower as gall
The subchardge of thy seruices is sayze fare,
So that thou finde hereafterwarde no fall

I thanke you cuttaines, and you purple wall,
Of my defence, now from yon cruell beast,
Almighty God keepe me fro such another feast.

Were I into the cabin, that I came fro,
For weate nor wo Would I neare come agayne.
With that she tooke hir leaue, and forth can go,
Somtimes throw y corne & somtimes throw y pl
When she was forth and free she was full fayne:
And merely marched vnto the moze,
I cannot tell how there she foze.

But I hearde say she passed to hir detine,
As warme as woll, suppose it was not great,
Full well stuffed at eche side and ende
With beanes, and nattes, pease, rye, and wheat:
When euer she lust she had inough to cate,
In quiet and rest, without any dread,
But to hir sisters feast, nomore she yead.

Moralitie.

¶ Remdes, ye may finde and ye will take heed,
In this fable a good Moraltie:
As fitches mingled are with noble seede,
So intermingled is aduersitie
With earthly ioy, so that no state is free
Without trouble and some vexation,
As namely they whiche cline vp most hie,

That are not content with small possession.

Blessed be the simple life without dread,

Blessed be sober feast in quietie:

Who hath inough, of no more hath he neede,

Though that it be little in quantitie:

Great abundance and blinde prosperitie,

Ofttimes makes an euil conclusion:

The sweetest life therefore in this countrie,

Is a contented minde with small possession.

O wanton man, that blest for to feede

Thy wombe and makes it a God to be,

Like to thy self; I warne thee wele to dreede,

The Cat comes, and to the mouse hies he,

What anayles than thy feast and royaltie,

With dreadfull hart and tribulation?

Best thing in earth, therefore I say for me,

Is content in hart, with small possession.

Thine owne fire is best my frende; if thou take heed,

It warnes well, and is worth gold to thee:

And Salomon sayth, if that thou wilt reede

Under the Heauen there cannot better bee,

Then for to be mery, and liue in honesty.

Wherefore I may conclude by this reason,

Of earthly joy it is the best degree,

A hart contented with small possession.

FINIS.

The pleasant tale of the Coo

and the Foxe how wyly beguyles
him selfe.

Though brutall beasts be irrationall,
 That is to say wanting discretion,
 Yet every man in their kinde naturall,
 Hath many and diuers inclination.
 The boystrous Beare, the Wolfe, the wilde Lion:
 The fore leyning, crafty, and cautelous:
 The dogge to barke on nights and keepe the house.
 So different they are in properties,
 Unknownen to man and so infinite,
 In kinde hauing so fell diuersities,
 My cunning is excluded for to endite.
 Of them as now I purpose not to wyte
 A case I fand whiche fell this other day,
 Betwixt a Fox and a Cock full gay.
 A wydow dwelt in a cottage many dayes,
 Whiche end hir foode with spinning on hir rocke,
 And no more had forsoth, as the fable sayes,
 Except of hennes she had a little flocke,
 And then to keepe she had a iolly Cock:
 Right couragious, that to this widow ay,
 Deuided the night, and crowde befoze the day.
 A little from this forsayd widowes house,

A thorny thicket there was of greate defence,
 Wherein a fore crafty and cautelous,
 Made his abode and dayly residence,
 Whiche to this widowe did great violence,
 In picking of pultry bothe day and night,
 And no way be reuenged on him she might.

This wply fore when that the Larche could sing,
 Full soze hungry vntill the towne him drest,
 Where this lusty Cock in the gray morning,
 Weary of night was flowne fro his nest,
 Laurence this saw, and in his minde kest
 The ieoperdy, the wayes, and the wyle,
 By what meanes he mought the Cock beguile.

Dissembling in countenance and cheere,
 On knees fell, and flattering thus he sayd:
 Good morne my mayster gentle Chauntclere.
 With that the Cock start backward in abayd:
 Sir by my soule ye neede not be affrayd,
 Nor yet for me to start nor flee abacke,
 For I come hither seruiice to you to make.

Would I not serue you, I were to blame,
 As I haue done to your progenitoz:
 Your father full oft filled hath my wame,
 And sent me meate from donghill to the moze,
 And at his ende I did my busie cure
 To holde his head and glue him drinckes warme,
 So at the last he sounded in my arme.

Knew ye my Father (quoth the Cock) and lough,
Pea my fayre Sonne; I helde by his head,
When that he died vnder a byrchen bough.
And sayd the Diridge when that he was dead:
Betwixt vs two how should there be any fead?
Whom should ye trust but me your seruitour,
That to your Father did so great honour?

When I behelde your feathers fayre and gent,
Your beake, your best, your hckell and your kome,
Sir by my soule and the blessed Sacrament,
My hart is warme, me thinkes I am at home:
To make you mery I would creepe on my wombe,
In frost and snow, in weather wan and neate,
And lay my golden lockes vnder your fecte.

This fayned fore false and dissimulate,
Made to this Cock a crafty cauillation:
Pee are me thanks changd and degenerate,
From your Father of his condition,
Of crafty crowing he might beare the crowne;
For he would on his toes stande and craw,
This was no lie, I stood beside and saw.

With that the Cock vpon his toes he,
Kest by his becke, and sang with all his might,
Quoth sir Laurence well sayde so mote I thee,
Pee are your fathers Sonne and heyre vpright:
But of his cunning yet ye want one flight,
For (quoth the Tod) he would withouten doubt,

of Elope the Phrygian.

Both winke, and crowe, & turne him thrice about.

The Cock infect with winde and false baynegloze,
That many puts vnto confusion,

Trusting to winne great worship therefore,
Unwarily winked walking vp and downe,

And so to sing and crowe he made him boune:

And sodainly by he had crowen a note,

The ffore was ware, and catcho him by the throte.

So to the wood without carrying he hied,

Of that crime hauing but little doubt,

With that Perroke, Spratoke, and Toppoke cried.

The widow heard; and with a crie came out,

Seing the case, she sight and gaue a shoute.

With hom murtherer hay, and gaue hir doze a knocke,

Saying now alas, lost is my gentle Cock.

As she were wood with many yell and crie,

Pulling hir heare, vpon hir breast can beate,

So pale of hie helpe in an extasie,

Fell downe for care in sorrowing and in sweate:

With that the silly hennes lefte their meate,

And whylest their dame lay thus in sorowe,

They all fell into disputation.

Alas (quoth Perrok) making soze monyng,

With teares great, whiche dotone hir cheekes fell,

Ponder was our le iiman and our dayes darlyng,

Our Fightingall, and our moynyng bell,

Our walking watch vs for to warne and tell,

Bot

When that Aurora with hir courlers gray,
Put vp hir head betwixt the night and day.

Who shall our Ieniman be? who shall vs leade?
When we are sad, who shall vnto vs sing?
With his sweete bill, he would breake vs the bread,
In all this world there was no kinder thing,
In paramory he would do vs pleasing,
To his power as nature did him giue:
Now after him alas, how shall we liue?

Quoth Spruceock then, cease sister of your sorow,
Pe be to madde such mourning for to glose,
We shall speede well I finde S. John to borrow:
The Proverbe sayes, as good loues comes as goes,
I will put on my hollydaye clothes,
And make me freshe against this iolly May,
So sing this song, was neuer widow so gay.

He was angry, and helde vs ay in awe,
And wounded with the speare of ielousie,
Of chamber glue Pertoke, full well yee know,
Wasted he was, of nature colde and dry.
Since he is gone, therefore sister say I,
Put care away, for that is best remead,
Let quicke to quicke, and dead goe to the dead.

Then Pertoke spake, with fayned fayth befoze,
In lust without loue he set all his delight:
Sister ye wote, of such as him a score,
Would not suffice to stake our appetite,

I holde here my hande since he is quite,
 Within a myle for shame and I durst specke,
 To get a lad should better claue our backe.

Than Toppok like a priest spake full crows,
 Yon was a very vengeance from the heauen,
 He was so loose and so lecherous.

He had (quoth she) Kittoks more than seven:
 But righteous God holding the ballance true,
 Smytes right soe though he be patient,
 For adultery, that will them not repent.

Full of pryde he was, and loyed in his sinne,
 And counted not for Gods sauiour nor sayth,
 But trusted all to riot and so did rinne:

While at last his sinnes can him skayth,
 To shamefull ende, and to yon sodden death.
 Therefore it is the very hand of God,
 That causeth him, be worried with the Tod.

When this was sayd, this widow from hir towne,
 Stert vp on foote and on the dogges she cryed,
 How bercke, berry, bowse, browne,
 Ripe shaw, run well, curteys, natticlyde,
 Together all without grudging see ye speede,
 Rescue my noble Cock or he be slayne,
 Or els to me, see ye come neuer againe.

Withouten more for feare of being spent,
 As fier of flint ouer the fieldes flawe,
 Full swiftly thozow woodes and waters went,

And ceased not sir Laurence till they sawe: and
 But when he sawe the houndes went on a rawe,
 Unto the Cock in minde he sayde God sen,
 That I and thou were present in my den.
 Then sayd the Cock with some good spirit and spite,
 Do my counsell, and I shall warrant thee: for
 Hungry thou art, and for great traualle tyred,
 Right faynt of force, and may not further fere:
 Quickly turne againe, and say that I and yre,
 Friends are made, and fellows for a yeere,
 Then will they stint, I'll stande betwene ye heere,
 Thus Tod though he was false and friuolous,
 And had craft his quarrell to defend,
 Deceyued was by meanes right maruelous,
 For wply beguiles himselfe at the latter end:
 He start abacke and cried as he was lernd,
 With that the Cock flew vnto a tree,
 Now whether sir Laurence laugh or no iudge yre,
 Beguiled thus the Tod vnder the tree,
 On knees fell, and sayd good Chaunteclere:
 Come downe agayne, and without meate or fee,
 I'll be your man, and serue you for a yeere.
 No false theefe and rouer, stand not me neere:
 My bloudy combe and my necke so sore,
 Hath parted friendship, twixt vs for euermore.
 I was vnwise that winked at thy wile,
 Wherethorow almost I lost my head.

I was more tole (quoth he) to be so still,
 Where thou to put my pray now into plead.
 Away false theefe, God keepe me fro thy fead.
 With that the Cock ouer the fieldes took flight,
 And in at the widowes window could he light.

Moralitie.

Now worthy folke, suppose this be a fable,
 And ouerheled with types fugerall,
 Yet may ye finde some sentence right agreeable,
 Under these fayned termes textuall.
 To our purpose this Cock well may we call,
 Rice proude men, boyde and baine glozious,
 Of kin and bloud, which are presumptuous.
 Fie puffed vp by pryde, thou art full poysonable,
 Who fauoureth thee of force must haue a fall,
 Thy strength is nought, thy steele stands vnsustaineable.
 Take witnesse of the fendes infernall,
 Whiche throwen downe were from the heauy hal.
 To Hels hole and to that hideous house,
 Bicause in pryde, they were presumptuous.
 This fayned fable may well be figurate,
 To flatterers with pleasant wordes whitt,
 With false meaning and minde most toxicate,
 To glose and lie, that setteth their whole delite,
 All worthy folke, at such should haue despite.

For where is there more perillous pestilence,
Than giue to lyars hasty credence.

The wicked minde and adulation,
Of these sweete suckers hauing the similitude,
Are bitter as gall, and full of poyson,
To tast it is, who cleerely vnderstode:
For this as now shortly to conclude,
These two sinnes, flattery and baine gloze,
(Are perillous) good folke flee them therefore.

F I N I S.

¶ The pleasant tale howe this
*false dissembling Tod, made his confession to the
hypocrite fryer Wolfe, Waytskayth.*

Leaving this wydow glad I you assure,
Of Chauntclere more iocund than I can tell:
And speake we of the subtile aduenture,
And destinite that to this fore befell,
Whiche durst no more with wayting intermell,
As long as leame or light was of the day,
But byding night full still lurking he lay.
Whyle that the Goddesse of the flood,
Phœbus had called to the harbor, y,
And Hesperus put by his cloudy hood,
Shewing his lusty visage in the skie.

Of Europe the Emigrant.

Then Laurence looked up where he did lie,
And cast his hande vpon his eye on hight,
Merry and glad that come was the night.

Out of the woodde vnto a hill he went,
Where he mought see the twinkling starres cleere,
And all the Planets of the firmament,
They? course and eke their moving in the sphere:
Some Retrograde, and some Stationere:
And of the Zodiacke in what degree,
They were eche one as Laurence learned mee.

Then Saturne olde was entred in Capricorne,
And Iuppiter moued in Sagittarie,
And Mars in the Rams head was bozne,
And Phebus in the Lion forth can carrie,
Venus the Crab, the Mone was in Aquarie,
Mercury the God of Eloquence,
Into the Virgin made his residence.

Without Astrolab, Quadrant, or Almanake,
Taught of nature by instruction,
The moving of the heauen this Lad can take,
What influence and constellation,
Was like to fall vpon the earth adowne.
And to himselfe he sayd this one thing,
God haue me Father that set me to learning,
My destiny and eke my death is knowne,
My aduventure is clearly to me kend,
With mischief mortall men are ouerthrowne,

B. b.

My

My mislying the sooner but if I mend,
It is rewarde of sinne, a shamefull end.
Therefore I will go seeke some confessor,
And shewe me cleane of my sinnes to this houre.

Now (quoth he) right fearfull are wee thyenys,
Our liues be eche night in aduenture,
Our cursed crafte full many men mischieues:
For euer we steale, and euer are like poore,
In dread and shame our dayes we endure.
Still hunting after mischief at every becke,
Till at last for our hye we are hanged by the necke,
Accursing thus his cankered conscience,
On top of a crag he cast aboute his eye,
And saw comming a little from thence,
A worthy Doctor in diuinitie,
Fryer Wolfe Maytshayth, in science wonders lie,
To preach and pray was comen from the closter,
With beads in hand, saying his Pater noster.

Seyng this Wolfe this wply traytor Cod,
On knees fell with head into his necke,
Welcome my ghostly father vnder God,
(Quoth he) with many bows, and many becke,
Ha (quoth the Wolfe) sic Cod for what effect,
Make ye such mone, rise vp on your feet?
Father, quoth he, I haue great cause to doet.

Ye are Mirrour, Lanterne, and liuely way,
To gayde such simple men as me to grace;

of hope the Whigian.

Your barefeete, and your naked soule of groy,
Your leane cheekes, your pale pitious face;
Whiche shewes to me your perfect holynesse,
For well were him that once in his line,
Had hap to you, his sinnes for to shewe.

Nay silly Laurence (quoth the WOLF) and loough,
It pleaseth me that ye are penitent.

Of theft and flouth, Sir I can tell inough,
That causeth me full sore to repent;
But Father by ye still here vpon the bent;
If you beseech, and heare mee to deplore,
My guiltie conscience that prickes me so sore.

Well, quoth the WOLF, sit downe vpon thy knee,
And he downe barehead late full humbly,
And so began with Benedictee.

When I this saw I drewe a little by,
For it is no good manners to heare nor spie,
Nor to reueale things sayde vnder that scale,
Yet to the Gods conscience, the WOLF did thus appeale

Art thou contrite and soye in thy spyte,
For thy trespass? nay Sir I cannot dore,
My thinkes that beunes are so hony sweete,
And Lambes flesh that new are letten blood,
For to repent my minde cannot conclude:
But of this thing, that I haue slayne so few,
Well, quoth the WOLF, in sayth thou art a shewe.

Since thou cannot forthink thy wickednesse,

Wilt

Wilt thou forbear to dine to come and mende?
 And I forbear, how should I live alas?
 Having no other craze me to defende,
 Neede causeth me to steale where euer I wende:
 I shame to begge, and worke I ne can,
 Yet would I fayne, pretende a Gentleman.

Well (quoth the Wolfe) thou wantest points two,
 That belong to perfect confession:

To the third part of penitence let vs go.

Wilt thou take paynes for thy transgression?

Ray sic, consider my complexion,
 Siclly and weak, and of my nature tender,
 Lo, will yee see, I am both leane and slender.

Yet neuerthelesse I would so it were light,
 Shorke and not greening to my tenderesse,
 Take parte of payne, fulfill it if I might,
 To set my silly soule in way of grace:

Thou shalt (quoth he) forbear flesh untill Pasce,
 To tame thy corps that cursed carrion:
 And here I giue thee full remission.

I graunt thereto, so ye will giue me leaue,
 To eate puddings, or lap a little blood,
 Or head, or feete, or panches let me proue,
 In case I fall no fleshe vnto my food:

For great neede, I giue thee leaue good,
 Twise in the weeke, for neede may haue no laue:
 God thanke you sic, for that text well I know.

When this was sayd, the Wolfe his wayes went,
 The fore a foote he goth vnto the flood,
 To get him fishe, hollily was his intent:
 But when he saw the water and waues wood,
 Astonisht all, still in a muse he stood:
 And sayd, better that I had bidden at home,
 Noz bene a fisher in the Devils name.

Now must I scrape my meate out of the flood,
 And I haue nother bootes noz yet boat.
 As he was thus for faulte of meate neare wood,
 Looking about like a wply goat,
 Under a tree he saw a trip of goate,
 Than was he mery, and thzough the hedge him hid,
 And from the goate, he stole hys little kid.

So ouer the hedge vnto the water hies,
 And toke the kiddie by the hoznes twayne,
 And in the water either twice oz thryse,
 He dowked him, and to him can he sayne:
 Go downe sir kid, come by sir Salmon againe.
 While he was dead so to the lande him drough,
 And of that new made Salmon he ate inough.

Thus finely filled with yong tender meate,
 Vnto a thicket for dreadd he him adrest,
 Under a bush, where the Sunne can beate,
 To beyke his brest and belly he thought best,
 And scorningly, he sayde, where he did rest,
 Stroking his wombe against the Sunnes beate,
 Upon

Upon this belly, what if a bolt should brate?

When this was sayd, the keeper of the gayt,
Carefull in hart, his kid was stolne away,
On every side full warily could he wayt,
Till at the last he saw where Laurence lay:
A bowe he bent, an arrow with feathers gray,
He drew to the head, and oʒ he stearth,
The fore he pricketh fast vnto the earth.

Now, quoth the fore, alas and well away,
Gored I am and may no further go,
He thinkes no man may speake a woʒde in play,
But now adayes in earnest its turned so,
He tooke him and his arrow drew him fro.
And foʒ his kid and othet violence,
He tooke his skinne and made a recompence.

Moralitie.

This sudden death, and vnprovidet end,
Of this false Ted without prouision,
Example is, exhorting folke to amend,
Foʒ dread of such and like confusion.
Foʒ many now hath good profession.
Yet not repentes, noʒ foʒ their sinnes weepe,
Bicause they thinke their lusty life so sweete.
Some bene also thozow consueted and rpte,
Manquishet with carnall sensualitie,

Suppose they be as for the time contrite,
 Can not forbear, nor fro their Gyves flee:
 Use draws nature so in propriety,
 Of beast and man, that needes they must do,
 As they of long time haue bene vnder thereto.
 Beware good folkes, and feare this sudden thote,
 Whiche smites soe without any resistauce,
 Attend wisely, and in your hartes note,
 Against death may no man make defence:
 Cease off your sinne, remove your conscience,
 Obey vnto your God and ye shall wend,
 After your death, to blisse withouten end.

FINIS.

The Reticall tale of the sonne and heyre of the foresayd Foxe called Fa- ther Wars, also the Parlement of foure footed beastes, holden by the Lyon.

This foresayd Foxe, that diide for his misdeede,
 Had not one Sonne was gotten rightuouly,
 To be heyre by law that might succede,
 Except one Sonne whiche in adultery,
 He gotten had by purchase priuily:
 And he gaue him to name father worst,
 That loude well pultry although he were curst.

It folowes still by reason naturall,
As degree by degree, of right comparison:
Of euill comes worse: of worse comes worst of all:
Of wrongfull getting comes false succession.
This fore bastard of generation,
Of very kinde behoued to be false,
So was his father and his Graundfater als.

As naturall seeking his meate by sent,
By chaunce he found his fathers carrion,
Raked, new flayne, and to him as he went,
Tooke vp his head, and on his knees fell downe,
Thanking the Gods of that conclusion.
And sayd, now shall I walke since I am heyre,
The boundes where thou were wont to repayre.

Fye couetous, unkind, and benemous:
The Sonne was glad he found his father dead,
By sudden shotte for deedes odious,
That he might raigne and rage still in his stead,
Dreading nothing the same life to leade,
In theft and robbery, as did his father before,
But to the end, attent he took no more.

Yet neuerthelesse thozow naturall pittie,
The Carrion vpon his backe he taeth,
Now finde I well this Proverbe true (quoth he)
Still runnes the fore, as long as he foote hath,
So with the corps vnto a pit he gaeth,
Of water full, and cast him in the deepe,

And to the Deuill he gaue his bones to keepe.

Oh foolish man plunged in worldlinesse,
To gather golde and other worldly neede,
To put thy soule in payne and heauinesse,
To ritche thine beyze whiche hath but little neede:
Hauie be thy good once, he takes but small heede,
To execute, to do, to satisfie,
Thy latter will, thy debt, and legacie.

This God to rest him, he passed till a crag,
And there he heard a boystrous hoine blow;
Whiche as he thought, made all the world wag:
At last a Unicorne came running below,
Then start he vp when he this heard and sawe,
With hoine in hand, a bill on best he bore,
The goodliest Pursuant that erst was seene before.

Unto a banke where he thought see aboute,
On euery side, in hast he gan him vie,
Shot out his voyce full shrill and gaue a shote,
And on this wise, twice or thryce did crie:
With that the beasts in the fieldes thereby,
All mernayling what such a thing shoulde meene,
Greatly agast, they gathered on a greene.

Out of a wood a Bull so gan he brydde,
And redde the text withouten tarrying,
Commanding silence, sadly thus he sayd:
The noble Lion, of all beasts the King,
Greeting to God healty everlasting.

To brutall beasts, and irrationall,
I send as to my subiects great and small.

My celsitude, and his magnificence,
Let you to wit, that euen incessant,
As to morrow with Royall diligence,
Upon this hill to holde my Parliament,
Straytly therfore I giue commaundement,
For to appeare before my trybunall,
Under all payne that may thereof befall.

The morrow came, and Phebus with his beames,
Consumed had the misty cloudes gray,
The ground was greene and as gold it gleames.
With grasse growing goodly great and gay,
The spice they spread to smell on euery spray:
The Lark, the Quail, and the Mole full he,
Sweetly can sing skipping fro tree to tree.

Two Leopards came with crowne of massine gold,
And so they brought it to the hills height,
With Iaspers, Jons, and royals Rubies rold.
And many diuers Diamondes ydight,
With silken ropes a pavilion downe they pight.
And here in throned late a mighty wilde Lion,
In robe Royall, with Scepter, sword & Cozone.

After the tenor of the cry before,
That all foure footed beasts should appeere in place,
As they commaunded were withouten more,
Before the Lozde, the mighty Lions grace,

And what they were to me, Laurence tolde apart,
As I shall rehearse apart of euery kinde,
As far as now occurreth to my minde.

The Minotaur a monster maruelous,
Bellerophon that beast of bastardy,
The Marwolf, and the Pegase perillous,
Transformed by assent of Sorcery:
The Linc, the Tyger full of tyzanny:
The Elephant, and eke the Dromedary,
The Camell with his crane necke, forth can carry.

The Leopard, as I haue tolde befoze,
The Antlop, the Sparth forth can sprede,
The paynted Panther, and the Unicorne.
The Rayndeer run thzough ryder, rush and reede,
The iolly Bennet, and the gentill steepe.
The Ass, the Mule, the Horse of euery kinde,
The Doe, the Roe, the hoined Hart, the Hinde.

The Bull, the Boze, the Bugle, and the Beare,
The tame Cat, Wildecat, and the wild wood Swine,
The hardbacke Hedgehogge, and pennde Porcupine,
The crookeborne Goate, the silly Sheepe, the Swine,
The wilde Duncce, the Buck, the halting Bocke,
The Fowmart, with the fybert forth can flocke.

The gray Greyhound with Sleuth hound forth cā slide,
With Dogges all, diuers and different,
The Rat ran, the Ghybard forth can glyde,
The pilde Polcat, with the Alekill went,

The fine fytche that hath furre, money bent.
 The Herten, with the Cony, and the Con,
 The Bowzaband, and eke the Lion.

The Harneſſet the Houlc can lead,
 Bicauſe that nature deniſd had hir ſight,
 Thus dyſſed they all ſwyth for dredd of dead,
 The Muſk, the little Houſe with all hir might,
 With haſt ſhe bid vnto that hill of hight,
 And many kinde of beaſts I could not know,
 Before they? Lord (the Lion) lowted low.

Being theſe beaſts all at his bidding boun,
 He gaue a brayde and looked him about,
 Then flatlings to his fecte they fell all downe,
 For dredd of death, they drouped all in doute,
 He looked when that he ſawe them lowte,
 And bad them with a countenance full ſweete,
 Be not afrayde, but ſtand by on your ſecte.

I let you wit my might is mercyable,
 And hurtes none that are to me proſtrate,
 Angry, auſterne, and alſo vnanniable,
 To all that ſtande agaynſt my royall ſtate,
 I reue of life all beaſtes that make debate,
 Againſt the might of my magnificence,
 See none pretende to quarrell in my preſence.

My celſtude, and my hie maieltie,
 With might, and mercy mingled ſhall be ay,
 The loweſt here I can full ſoone rayſe hie,

And make him Master over you all I may.
 The Dromedary if he will make delay,
 The great Camell though he were neere to croule,
 Can bring as lowe as the little Mause.

See that within twenty myles where I am,
 The Kid goe fank by the Goates side,
 The Tod for his head looke not on a Lam,
 Nor no rauenynge beaſt, neither run nor ride.
 They couched all after this was cride,
 The Juſtice bad the court for to beginne,
 The ſutes called, and forſaytes bring in.

The Panthor with his paynted coate ſhene,
 Fenced the court as the law byd,
 Then the Tod lurkt back for feare bring ſcene,
 And ſtarte backe behind one, and ſo him hid,
 Pulling his beare piteouſly he cride,
 Quaking for dread, and ſighing can he ſay,
 Alas this hower, alas thus dollfull day.

I wot this ſudden aſſembly that I ſee,
 Hauing the poynts of a Parlement,
 Is made to mar, ſuch miſdoers as mee,
 Therefore if I me ſweete I ſhalbe ſhent:
 I will therefore goe and be abſent,
 To hyde or flee, I wote not in fayth,
 All is a like, there folowes nought but death.

Perplexed thus in hart can he meane,
 Throo falſhod how he might himſelfe defende,

His hood he drew right oze his eyne,
 And winking with one eye forth he wend,
 Halting he came that he might not be kend:
 And for dread that he should be arrest,
 He playde bo peep behinde fro beast to beast.

O troubled spyte and cancred conscience,
 Before a King rayning with rightuousnesse,
 Blushing cheekes, and shamefull countenance,
 Farewell thy fame, now gone is all thy grace,
 The Philomy, the fauour of thy face,
 For thy defence, is foule and disfigurate,
 Brought to the light by these tokens of late.

Be thou attached with theste or with treason,
 For thy misdoedes, wrongs, and wicked say,
 Thy cheere changes Laurence, thou must looke don
 The worship of this worlde is gone thee away,
 Loke to this God, how he was in affray.
 And flee the sinne of falshood I thee reede,
 Wherethrough there followes sinne & shameful deed.
 Appearing thus before their Lord and King,
 In order set all in ioy and myght,
 Of every kinde he made forth bring,
 And awfully he spake and thus put forth,
 If there was any kinde of beast on yearth,
 Absent? and thereto made them deeply sweare:
 And they sayde none, except one Stud gray Mare.
 Let sende a message vnto that Stud,

The court then sayde, now who shall it be,
Come forth Laurence luryng vnder thy hood,
I ha fir mercy, lo I haue but one eye,
Hurt in the hoghe, and crookt as ye may see:
The Wlof is better farre in ambassage,
And thereto learned, wise and sage.

The King stode vp, and sayde hence away both,
And they to goe without any tarrying,
Duer hill and dale, for feare of his wroth,
And found the Mare at hir meate in the morning.
Now (quoth the Tod) Madame come to the King,
The court is called, and ye are found contumax,
Let be Laurence (quoth she) your courtly knar.

Mistresse (quoth he) come, to the court ye must goe,
The Lion hath commaunded so in dedde,
Sir Tod (quoth she) go you and your felloe,
I haue respite a yere, and yee will reede,
I cannot spell (quoth he) so God me speede:
Here is the Wlof a noble Clerke at all,
And of this message is made principall.

He is autentike and a man of age,
And he hath great practise of the chauncelery,
Let him go looke and reade your priuiledge,
And I shall stand and beare witnesse you by.
Where is thy respite (quoth the Wlof) on hie?
Sir it is here vnder my boose well hid,
Holde vp thy heele (quoth he) and so the did.

Though he were blinded, with paine yet he presumed,
To take downe low where that his letter lay,
With that the mare gart him vpon the gums,
And strake the hat of his head away:
Halfe out of life, lying downe there he lay.

Alas (quoth Laurence). *Lupus* thou art best,
His cunning (quoth the Mare) was worth some cost.

Laurence (quoth she) wilt thou looke on my letter,
Since that the Wolfe nothing thereof can win?

Ray by S. Byde (quoth he) me thinkes it better,
To sleepe in a whole, than in a hurt skinne.

Once a scrole I fand, and this was written in,
For five shillings I would not lose all nor some,
Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.

With broken skalpe, & cheekes that were bloudy,
This wretched Wolfe wiping them as he went,
Of amends inuenting to get remedy.

To tell the King the case was his intent,
Sir (quoth the Cod) by de still vpon this bent,
And fro your browes washe away this blood,
And take some drinke for it will do you good.

To fetch water this fraudfull Fore fore,
Sidelong abacke as though he were sicke,
And as chaunst he met coming fro the moore,
A trip of Lambe, dauncing on a dike,
This traytour Cod this tyzant and this tike,
The fattest of the flocke he killed hys,

And ate his fill, so to the Adolfe he goes.

They dranke together, and so there iourney takes,
 Before the King, soone kneeled on their knees,
 Where is the Mare? Sir Tod, was contumar.
 Then Laurence sayd, my Lorde, aske not mee,
 Demaund of your Doctor of Diuinitie,
 With his redde Cap can tell you well inough:
 With that the Lion, and all the rest lough.

Tell on the case now Laurence let vs heare:
 This witty Adolfe, quoth he, this Clerke of age,
 On your behalf he had the Mare to appeare,
 And so she alledged hir priuledge,
 Come neare and see, and you shall haue your wage.
 Bycause he red by? respit playne and wele,
 Ponder red bonnet she raught him with hir heele.

The Lion sayd, by yon cap I see then,
 This tale is true, who herde vnto it takes:
 The greatest Clerkes are not the wyldest men,
 The hurt of one, happy the other makes:
 As they were talking of these mery knakes,
 And all the Court in mirth and in gam,
 In comes the Ewe, the mother of the Lam.

Before the Justice on hir knees she fell,
 Put out hir playnt on this wise wofully:
 This Harlot hozeson, and this hound of hell,
 Deuoured hath my Lambe full doggedly,
 Within a mile, contrary to your crie,

For Gods loue my Lord geue me the labour,
Of this larker: with that Laurence let draw.

Byde quoth the Lion limmer, let vs see,
If it be sothe the Silly Pewe hath sayde,
A ha soueraigne Lord, please your grace, quoth he,
My purpose was with him for to haue playde,
And causles he fledde as he had bene affrayde.
For drede of death ouer a hedge with mischief,
And brake his necke, thou lies, quoth the false thief.

His death by practise may be proued cith,
Thy goye gums, and thy blondy snoute,
The wolle, the flesh, it stickes in thy teeth:
That is euidence inough without doubte.
The Justice bid chosse the quest then about:
And so they did, and found that he was false,
Of murther, theft, and treason alse.

They bound him fast, the Justice bad belue
To geue the dome, and take of all his claes,
The Wolf that new made Doctor gan him chyn,
So forth was led, and to the Gallowes him hars,
And at the ladder foote his leaue he taes,
The Ipe was hangman, and bid him soone ascend,
And trussed him vp, and thus he made his end.

Moralitie.

Right as the miner in his mynerall,
Farre gold with fire may from the lead wolle win,
Right so vnder a fable figurall,

Had sentences may seeke, and after seek,
As dayly doth the Doctors of deuine,
That to our liuing full well can apply,
And paynt the matter out with Poetry.

The Lion is the world by likelynesse,
To whom bowes, both Emperour and King,
And thinks of this worlde to get increase,
Minding dayly for to get more liuing,
Some for to rule, and some to racke and ring,
Some gathereth geare, some gold, some other good,
To win this world, some worke as they were wood.

The Mare is men of good condition,
As pilgrims walking in this wildernesse,
Approuing that for right religion,
Their God only to please in euerie place,
Abstract from this worldes wretchednesse,
Fighting with lust, presumption and pryde,
And from this worlde in minde are mortified.

This Wolf I liken to sensualitie,
As when like brutall beastes we do accord,
Our mindes all to this worldes vanitie,
Liking take, and loue it as our Lord,
Flee fast therfore, if thou wilt right remord:
Then shall reason rayse, taighe and ring,
And for thy soule there is no better thing.

Hir horse I liken to the thought of dead,
Wilt thou remember man, that thou must die,
Thus mayst thou breake sensualities head,

And

THE MORAL FABLES
 And fleshly lust away from thee shall flie,
 As soon as thou thy minde dost mortifie.
 Salomons saying thou must remember heerein,
 Think on thy end, thou shalt not gladly sinne.
 This Tod I lyken, to temptations,
 Bringing to minde many thoughts bayne,
 Assaulting man with sweete perswasions.
 And ready for to trap them in a trayne,
 Yet if thou see, sensualitie neare slayne,
 And soden death draw neare with pangs sore,
 They quickly goe, and tempteth them no more.
 O mediator, mercifull and meeke,
 Thou soueraigne Lord, and King celestiall,
 Thy mercies most humbly we beseeke.
 Us to defende from payne and perils all,
 And helpe vs up to thy heavenly hall,
 In glory where we may see the face of God,
 And thus endes, the talking of the Tod.

FINIS.

¶ The wofull tale of the playn-
 tise Dogge, agaynst the poore sheepe, before
 Iustice Wolfe.

¶ Hopt a tale puts in memory,
 How that a Dogge, because that he was poore,
 Call

Called a Sheepe to the Consistory,
 For certayne bread fro him for to recover:
 A crafty Wolfe was Judge that time, and boze
 Auctoritie, and Jurisdiction,
 And for the Sheepe sent forth a straye summon.
 For by the ble and course and common stile,
 On this manner made his citation:
 I master Wolfe, partlisse of fraude and guyle,
 Under the paynes of his suspension,
 Of great cursing and interdiction.
 Sir Sheepe, I charge thee, for to appeere,
 And answer to Perry Dogge, befoze me heere.
 Sir Corby Raucn, was made a parratour,
 Who picked had full many sheepes eye,
 The charge he taketh, and on the letters boure,
 Summond the Sheepe befoze the Wolfe, that he,
 Peremptorly, within two dayes or thre,
 To appeare vnder the paynes in the bill,
 To heare what Perry dogge, will say thee til.
 The summons made befoze witnesse inowe,
 The Raucn as to his office well offerth,
 Andorsed hath the writte : and on he flew,
 The silly Sheepe for sorow, durst lay no mouth on erth
 Till he befoze the lawfull iudge apperth.
 The houre of cause, whiche that iudge vied than,
 Was, when Hesperus to shewe his face began.
 The Foxe was Clerke, and notary in the cause,

The Kight, and the Crow at the barre could stand
 As Advocates expert in the lawes,
 The Dogges to pleade together took in hand,
 Whiche were confederate straitly in a band,
 Against the sheepe for to procure sentence,
 Though it were false, they had no conscience.

The Clerke called the Sheepe, and he was there,
 The Advocates on this wise could propone,
 Of certayne bread worth five shillings or more,
 Thou owes the Dogge, of whiche the terme is gon
 Of his owne head without Advocate alone,
 The Sheepe innocently gave answer in this case,
 Here I appeale fro the Judge, the time, the place.

This is my cause I will shew: in effect,
 The lawe sayes, it is right perillous,
 To enter in plea before a iudge suspect,
 And you sir Wolfe haue bene full odious
 To me, for with your tuskes ravenous,
 Haue slayne full many kinsmen of mine,
 Therfore as iudge suspect, fro you I do decline.

And to be brief, of this court ye members all,
 Both Masters, Clerkes, and Advocate,
 To me and mine, are enemies mortall,
 And as hath bene as many Sheperds wate,
 The place I suspect, the time is very late:
 Wherefore no Judge should sit in Consistory,
 So late at euen, I you accuse for thy.

Of Sheepe and the Wolf
When that the Judge on this wise was accused,
He had the parties choolse with one assent,
Two arbitrators, as in the lawe is vld,
For to declare, and giue arbitrement,
Whether the Sherpe should answer in iudgement
Before the Wolf, and so they did agree,
Of whome the names, ye shall shortly see.

The Beare, and Brocke, the matter tooke in hand,
For to decyde, if this exception
Was of no force, or lawfully might stand.
And therupon as Judges they sate doune,
And helde a long while disputation,
Seeking full many decrees of the lawe,
And glozes also the veritie to know.

Of Ciuill law volumes full many they reuolue,
The Codies and Digesters new and olde,
Contrait, protrait argumentes they resolue,
Some obiecting, and some gan holde,
For prayer or pryce trow ye they would be controld.
But holde the glose and text of the Decreis,
As true Judges, I besyrew them ay that leis.

Shortly to make an end of this debate,
The arbytratours thus they swearen playne,
The sentence giuen, and procelle fulminate.
The Sheepe should passe before the Wolf againe,
And end his plea, then was he nothing fayne,
For fro this sentence could he not appeale,

Now Clerkes I aske, if this sentence were weak.

The sheepe againe before the Wolfe appeared,
Without Advocate, abashedly could stand,
Up rose the Dogge, and to the Judge thus swerd,
A summe I payd to him, before in hand,
For certaine bread, a witnesse here doth stand.
That wrongfully the sheepe doth holde the bread,
Whiche he denide, and there began to plead.

And when the sheepe this strife had contestate,
The iustice in the cause forth gan procede,
Laurence the adtes, and the processe wrote,
And thus the plea vnto the ende they speede:
This cursed court corrupted all for neede,
Against good sayth, law, and eke conscience,
For this false Dogge pronounced the sentence.

And so forthwith put it in execution,
The Wolfe charged the sheepe without delay,
Under the paynes of interdiction,
The summe of siluer or the bread to pay.
Of this sentence, alas, what shall I say?
Whiche condemned hath the silly innocent,
And iustified the wrongfull iudgement.

The sheepe dreading more the execution,
Obeying to the sentence: he could take,
His way vnto a marchaunt of the towne,
And solde the wolfe that he bore on his backe,
So bought the bread, and to the Dogge can make

of hope the crygan.

Ready payment, as it commaunded was,
So naked and bare to the fildes can pas.

Moralitie.

This selly sheepe may represent the figure,
Of poore commons that dayly are oppressed,
By tyrannous men whiche settes all their cure,
By false meanes to make a wrong conquest,
In hope this present life should euer last:
But all beguylde, they will in shorthe tyme end,
And after death to lasting paynes wend.

This Wolf I liken to a Shypue stout,
Which byeth a forsayte at the Kings hand,
And hath with him a cursed assise about,
And endites all the poore men vpon land,
Or if the Baylife hath layd on him his wand,
Though he were true as euer were S. John,
Hangd shall he be, or with the iudge compone.

This Raucn I lyken to a false Coroner,
Whiche hath a portion of the inditement,
And passes forth befoze the Justiciar,
All misdoers to bring vnto Judgement,
But looke if he was, of any true intent,
To scrape out John and wypte in Will, or Wat,
And take a byrbe at both, how like ye that.

Of this false Tod of whiche I spake befoze,

D.

And

And of this sight, what they mought signifie:
 Of their nature, as now I speake no more,
 But of this Sheepe and of his carefull crie,
 I shall rehearse: for as I passed by,
 Where that he lay, I chanced to looke downe,
 And heard him make soe lamentation.

Alas (quoth he) this cursed constellation,
 In middes of winter now a dayes is made,
 When Bozeas with blastes bitterly,
 And harde frostes, the floures downe can fade,
 On bankes bare now may I make no bade:
 And with that woode into a bushe he crap,
 Fro colde weather, and frostes him to hap.

Quaking for colde, soe mourning ay among,
 Cast vp his eye vnto the heauens hight,
 And sayd, Lord God why sleeps thou so long?
 Walke; and discerne my cause grounde on right,
 See how I am by fraude, mastery, and flight,
 Pilled full bare, and so is many a one,
 Now in this worlde, right wonder too begone.

See how this cursed sonne of couetise,
 Bought hath the Lawier, and eke the lawe,
 Now few or none will execute Justice:
 In fault of whom the poore man is overthzow,
 The verity suppose, the iudge it know,
 He is so blinded with affection,
 Without dread, for might, he lets the right go downe

Blest thou not (Lord) this world overturne is,
And who will change good Gold in Lead or Tinne,
The poore is pulled, the Lord may do no mis,
And Simony is holden for no sinne,
Now is he glad with craft that most may winne:
Good neighbourhood is slaine, and pittie is ago,
Alas, good Lord) why lets thou it be so?

Thou lets it thus be for our great offence,
Thou sendes vs trouble, and plagues sore,
As hunger, dearth, great warre, or pestilence,
But fewe amendes now their life therefore,
All poore people as now may do no more,
But pray to thee, since that we are opprest,
Here in this earth, graunt vs in heauen good rest.

F I N I S.

¶ The exemplatiue tale of the

*Lion and the Mouse: With the Authors
Prologue before.*

In mids of June, that sweete season,
Whē that fayre Phebus with his beames bright,
Had dyed by the dew, fro dale and downe,
And al the land made with his beames light,
In a morning betwixt midday and night,
I rose, and put all slouth and sleepe aside,
And to a wood I went, alone without gurdy.

Sweete was the smell of floures white and redde,
 The noyse of byzdes right delicious,
 The Beuis song right aboue my head,
 The ground growing with grasse gracions,
 Of all pleasaunce that place was plentuous,
 With sweete odours, and byzdes hatmony,
 The moynynge milde, my mirth was moze for thy.

The Roses redde growing on bankes could ryse,
 The Pymerose, Violet purple and blake,
 To heare it was a heauenly Paradise,
 Such mirth the Maues, and the Meric could make,
 The blossoms braue, blyke by in banke and blyke,
 The smell of herbes and of the fowles cry,
 Contending who should haue the victorie.

Me to conserue fro the Sunnes heate,
 Under the shadow of a Hawthorne greene,
 I layde me downe among the floures sweate,
 So cladde my head, and closed both myne eyne,
 On sleepe I fell among these byzdes fine,
 And in my dreame me thought came through the feld,
 The fayrest man that euer I beheld.

His gowne was of a cloth as whyte as milke,
 His Jacket was of chamlet purpure browne,
 His hood of Scarlet brocched well with silke,
 And hangyng wise vnto his girdle downe,
 His bonnet rounde of the olde fashion,
 His bearde was whyte, his eyne were great and gray,
 With lockes of heares, which on his shoulders lay.

A roll of paper in his hand he bare,
 A Swans pennic stickyng vnder his eare,
 An inkehorn with a pretty gilt pennayle,
 A bagge of silke all at his girdle beare,
 Thus was he goodly girded in his geare,

Of Nature large, and with a fearefull face,
Euen where I lay he came a sturdy pace.

and sayd God speede my sonne: and I was fayne,
Of that good woorde and of his company,
With reuerence, I answerd him agayne,
Welcome father: and he sate downe me by,
Displease you not my good master, though I,
Demand your byrth, your faculty and nome,
Why ye come here, or where ye dwell at home,

My sonne (sayd he) I am of gentill bloud,
My natiue land is Rome withouten nay,
In that towne first to the scholes I yecde,
In ciuill lawe studied full many a day,
And now my winning is in heauen for ay,
Elope I hight, my writyng and my warke,
Is kend and knowen to many a cunning clarke.

O master Elope Poete Lawreat,
God wote ye are full decre welcome to me,
Are ye not he that all the fables wrote,
Whiche in effect suppose they farned be,
Are full of prudence and Moralitic?
Saye Sonne (sayd he) I am the self same man,
God wote if that my hart was more than.

I sayd, Elope my master venerable,
I you beseech most inticly,
Ye would not deryn to tell a prey fable,
Concluding with a good Moralitie.
Shaking his head, he sayd, my sonne let be,
What doth it profite to tell a farned tale,
When holy preaching may nothing auayle?

Now in this worlde my thinke right few or non,
Vnto Gods worde that hath deuotion,

The eare is deafe, the hart is hard as ſton,
 Now open ſinne without any correction,
 The hart enclining to the earth adowne,
 So ruſted is this world with canker blake,
 That now my tales may little ſuccour make.

Yes gentle ſir (ſayd I) for my request,
 Not to diſpleaſe your fatherhead, I pray,
 Under the figure of ſome brutall beaſt,
 A morall fable that ye would dayne to ſay,
 Who knoweth, not I, may learne and beare away,
 Something thereby, hereafter may auayle:
 I graunt (quoth he) and thus begins his tale.

The ende of the Prologue, and here be-
 gins the Tale.

A Lion at his pray was ouerrunne,
 To recreate his limmes and to reſt,
 Beking his breaſt and belly at the Sunne,
 Under a tree lay in the fayre forreſt:
 Then comes there a trip of myce out of their neſt,
 Right mery and glad, all daunſing in their guiſe,
 And ouer the Lion vaulted twiſe or thryſe.

He lay ſo ſtill, the Myſe were not aſeard,
 But to and fro, oze him toke their trace,
 Some twirled at the muchachos of his beard,
 And ſome ſpared not to clawc him on the face,

Merry

Merry and glad thus daunced they a space,
Till at the last, the noble Lion wooke,
And with his paw, the master mouse he tooke.

She gaue a crye, and all the rest agast,
Their dauncing left, and hyd them sone els where,
She that was tane, cried and wept full fast,
And sayd, alas, the time that I came here,
Now am I tane a wofull prysoneere,
And for my gilte, must hyde incontinent,
Of life or death to heare the iudgement.

Then spake the Lion to that carefull mous,
Thou captyf wretch, and vile vnwoorthy thing,
Ouer malapert and eke presumptuous,
Thou wert to make out ouer me thy tripping:
Knewest thou not I was both Lord and King,
Of beasts all, yea, quoth the mouse, I knowe,
But I wilt not bicause ye lay so lowe.

Lord I beseech thy kingly royaltie,
Heare what I say, and take in patience,
Consider first my simple pouertie,
And then thy might and hie magnificence:
See also how things done of negligence,
Neither of malice, nor of presumption,
The rather should haue grace and remission.
We were replete, and had great aboundance
Of all things such as to vs belonged,
The sweete season prouoked vs to daunce,

And make such my thyng nature to be leamed,
 Ye lay so still as though ye had bene strangled,
 That by my soule we wend ye had bene dead;
 Els would we not haue daunced oze your head.

Thy false excuse, the Lion sayd agayne,
 Shall not auayle one whit I to thee say,
 I put the case I had bene dead oze slayne,
 And so my skinne bene stopped full of hay,
 Though thou had found my figure in the way,
 Bicause it bare the print of my persone,
 Thou shouldst for feare on knees haue fallen downe.

For thy trespass thou can make no defence,
 My noble person this to vilepene,
 Of thy fellows, nor thy owne negligence,
 For to excuse thou can no cause pretend,
 Therefore thou suffer shalt a shamefull end,
 And death, such as to treason is decreed,
 Upon the gallowes all hanged but the head.

May mercy Lord, now at thy grace I aske,
 As thou art King of all beasts coronate,
 Awaige thy wrath, and let it ouerpasse,
 And make thy minde to mercy inclinate,
 I graunt offence is done to thyne estate,
 Wherefore I worthy am as now to die,
 But if thy kingly mercy pardon me,

In euery Iudge mercy and ruth should be,
 As assessors, and Colaterall,

Without

Without mercy iustice is crueltie,
As sayed is in the lawes speciall,
When rigour sittes in the trybunall,
The equitie of law who may susteyne?
Right few or none, least mercy go betweene.

Also ye know the honour triumphall,
Of all victorie, vpon the strength depends,
Of his conquest, whiche manfully in battell,
Throwe ieopardy of warre long defends,
What pryce or prayse when the battayle ends,
Is sayd of him that ouercomes one man,
Himselfe to defend, whiche neyther may nor can.

A thousand myse to kill and eke deuoure,
Is litle manhood to a strong Lion,
Full litle worship shall ye winne therefore,
To whose strength is no comparison:
It will appayze some part of your renoume,
To slay a mouse, whiche may make no defence,
But asking mercy at your excellence.

Also it seemes, not your celsitude,
Whiche vles dayly meates delicious,
To file your teeth or lippes with any bloud,
Whiche to your stomacke is contagious,
Unhollome meate also, is a sozpy mous,
And that namely vnto a strong Lion,
Wont to be fedde with gentill venison.

My life is litle wazth, my death is lesse.

Yet and I live, I may peradventure,
Supply your highnesse being in distresse,
For oft is seene a man of small stature,
Rescued hath a Lord of great honour,
That was beset and in poynt overthrowne,
Thro' misfortune, such case may be your owne.

When this was sayd, the Lion his language,
Pawed, and thought according to reason,
And made mercy his cruell p^re asswage,
And to the mouse graunted remission:
Opened his paw, and she on knees fell downe,
And both hir hands vnto the heauen heild,
Crying almighty God your grace euer sheild.

When she was gone, the Lion went to hunt,
For he had naught but liued by his pray,
And slew both tame and wilde as he was wont,
And in the countrey, made many a great fray,
Till at the last the people found the way,
This cruell Lion how that they mought take.
So of hempen cordes strong nets can they make.

And in a lane where he was wont to ry, n,
With ropes rude fro tree to tree they hing,
So cast a ring without wood and within,
With hornes fast blowing, and hounds crying,
The Lion fledde, and thro' the lane running,
Fell in the net, and so caught by chance,
For all his strength could make no resistance.

Weltring

Of Elope the Phrygian.

Wallowing about with hideous roling,
While to, while fro, while he might succour get,
But all in vayne, it anayled him nothing,
The more he stong the faster was the net,
The ropes rude were so fast about him set,
On euery side, that succour saw he none,
But still lying, and mourning made his mone.

O lamentable Lion lying here so late,
Where is the might of thy magnificence?
Of whom al brutall beasts in earth stode awe,
And dread to looke vpon thy excellence,
Without hope, or help, without succour or defence,
In bandes strong here must I lie (alace)
Till I be slayne I see no other grace.

There is no wight that will my harmes weake,
Nor Creature, do comfort to my crowne,
Who shall me help? who shall my bands breake?
Who shall me put fro payne of this prison?
By that he had made this lamentation,
Through aduventure the little House come by,
And of the Lion heard the wofull cry.

And suddenly it came in till his minde,
That it should be the Lion by his close,
And sayd now were I false, and right unkind,
But I quite of his goodnesse some part, I suppose
Thou did to me, and on his wayes he goes,
To his fellows, and on them fast can crie,

Come

THE MORAL FABLES

Come help, come help, and they came by and by.
Lo (quoth the mouse) this is the same Lion,
That grace graunted me when I was tane anon,
And now is fast here bounden in pylson,
Breaking his hart with great mourning and mone,
Without we him help, of succour wotes he none,
Come helpe to quite one good turne for another,
And lose him quickly: they answered yea good brother.

They tooke no knife, their teeth were sharpe inough:
To see that sight, forsoth it was great wonder,
How that they ran among the ropes tough,
Before, behinde, some aboue, some vnder,
And thore the ropes of the net in sunder,
Then bad him rise, and he start by anon,
And thanked them, so on his way is gone.

Now is the Lion free from all daunger,
Loose and deliuered to his libertie,
By little beasts, and of simple power,
As ye haue heard, bicause he had pittie,
(Quoth I master) is there a Moralitie,
Of this fable? yea Sonne (he sayd) right good,
I pray you sir then, (quoth I) conclude.

Moralitie.

As I suppose this mighty gay Lion,
May signifie a Prince, or Emperour,

Any

Any potestate, or any King with crowne,
Whiche should be captayne, guyde and gouernour,
Of his people that takes no labour,
To rule, and stee, the land, and iustice keepe,
Without lying still in lustes, slouth, and sleepe.

The fayre Forrest with leaues freshe to see,
With foules singing, and floures fayre and sweete,
Is but the worlde and his prosperitie,
As false pleasaunce mingled, and care replete,
Right as the Rose, with frost and winter wete,
Fades, so doth the worlde and them delauie,
Whiche in their lustes most confidences haue.

These little myse are but the common tie,
Wanton, vnpye, without correction,
Their Lordes, and Princes, when that they see,
Of Justice make no execution,
They dreas nothing to make rebellion,
And disobey: for why, they stande in no awe,
That makes them, their soueraigne not to knowe.

By this fable ye Lordes of prudence,
May consider the vertue of pietie,
And to remit sometime a great offence,
And mitigate with mercy, crueltie,
Ofttimes is seene a man of small degree,
Hath quitte a King eyther with good or ill,
As the Lord hath done, rigour or grace him till.

Who knoweth not, how some, a Lord of gret renown
Rouling

Rowling in worldly lust and bayne pleasure,
 May be ouerthrowen, destroyde, and put downe,
 Through false fortune? which of all variance,
 Is hole mistresse and leader of the daunce,
 To vnjust men, and blindes them so sore,
 That they no perill can prouide before.

These rascal men that hanged hath the net,
 In which the Lion suddenly was throwne:
 Maynted alway amendes for to get,
 (For hurt men, wytes in the mable stone)
 More to expound, as now I let alone,
 Both King & Lorde may well know what I meane,
 The figure hereof, oft times hath bene scene.

When this was sayd (quoth Escop) my fayre child,
 I thee beseeke, and all men for to pray,
 That treason of this countrey be eride,
 And Justice raigne, and Lordes keepe their say,
 Vnto their soueraigne Prince both night and day:
 And with that worde he banisht, and I woke,
 So through the wood my iourney when I toke.

FINIS.

The notable tale of the preaching of the Swallow.

Of his prudence, and working maruelous,
 The profound witte of God omnipotent,

Of Elope the Phrygian.

Is so perfitte, and so ingenious,
Excellent farre, above mans iudgement,
For why to him all things are ay present,
Right as it is oꝝ any tyme shalbe,
Before the sight of his Diuinitie.

Therefore our soules with sensualitie,
So settred are in this pylson corporall,
We may not clearly vnderstand nor see;
God, as he is, nor things Celestiall,
Our darke and deadly corps naturall,
Blindeth the spirituall operation,
Like as a man were bounde in pylson.

In metaphisicke Aristotle doth say,
That mans soule is like a backes eye,
Whiche lurketh still as long as light of day,
And in the twyglit commeth forth to see,
His eyes are weake, the sunne he may not see,
So is our soule with fantasie opprest,
To know the things in nature manifest.

For God is in his power infinite,
And mans soule is feeble and ouer small,
Of vnderstanding weake and vnperfected,
To comprehend him that contaynes all:
None should presume by reason naturall,
To search the secretes of the Trinitie,
But beleue firmly, and let vayne reasons be.
Yet neuerthelesse we may haue knowledging,

Of God almighty, by his creatures,
 That he is good, sayre, wise and benigne,
 Example take by these iolly floures,
 Right sweete of smell, and pleasaunt of colours,
 Some greene, some blew, some purple, white, & redde,
 Thus distributed by gifte of his godhed.

The firmament paynted with Starres cleare,
 From east to west rolling in circle round,
 And euery planet in his proper Sphaire,
 In morning making harmony and sound,
 The fire, the ayer, the water, and the ground,
 To vnderstand is nough it wis,
 That God in all his workes witty is.

Looke well on the fish that in the seas be,
 Looke well in the earth all kinde of beastiall,
 The foules sayre so forcibly they flee,
 Parting the ayre with winges great and small,
 Then looke to man, that he made last of all,
 Like to his Image, and his similitude,
 By this we know that God is faire and gude.

All Creatures he made for the behoue,
 Of man and to his suppoztation,
 In this earth, both vnder and aboue,
 In number, weight, and due pzoportion,
 The difference of time and eche season,
 Concordant to our oportunitie,
 As dayly by experience wee may see,

The Sommer with his iolly mantell of greene,
With floures sayre to furre it, him hath sent,
Whiche Flora Goddess of the floures Queene,
Hath to that Lord as for his season lent,
And Phebus with his golden beames gent,
Hath purfelled and painted pleasantly,
With heate, and moysture, stilling fro the sky.

Then Haruest hote, when Ceres that Goddess,
Her Barnes blessed hath with aboundaunce,
And Bacchus God of wines reuend her,
The tonne pipes, in Italy and Fraunce,
With wines wight, and lycours of pleasaunce,
And *Copia temporis* to fyll his hohne,
That neuer was full of wheat, nor other corne.

Then comes winter wanne, when austerne Eolus,
God of the winde with blastcs bozeall,
The greene garnient of Summer glozious,
Hath all to rent, and reuen in peeces small,
Then floures sayre faded with frostes, must fall,
And birdes iocond changing their notes sweete,
Still mourning, neare slayne with snow & sleate.

The dales deepe with snow drowned is,
Both hill and holt beled with frostes hoze,
And Larkes bene left bare of any blis,
By wicked windes of the winter woze,
All wilde beasts then from the fields froze,
Drawes for dredd vnto their dennes deepe,

Couching for colde in hooles them to keepe.

After comes ver, when winter is away,
The Secretary of Sommer with his cell,
When Columbine by peares thzough the clay,
Whiche fled was befoze with frostes fell,
The Hauis, and the Meele, begins to meil,
The Larkes on loft, with other byzdes theyz sowne,
They sped abzode ouer dale and dowe.

That same season in a fayze morning,
Right glad that bitter blastes neare ago,
Unto the wood to see the flowers spring,
And heare the Hauis sing and byzdes mo,
I passed forth, and looking to and fro,
To see the soyle, that was right selsonable,
Sapple, and to receyue all seedes able.

Thus passing on great myztth I tooke in minde,
Of labozers to see the businesse,
Some making dikes, and some the plough can winde,
Some sowing seedes fast fro place to place,
The Harrowes hopping in the furrowes trace,
It was great ioy for him that loues cozne,
To see them labour both at euen and mozne.

And as I went along a banke thereby,
In hart greatly reioysing of that sight,
Unto an hedge, vnder a Hawthorne hie,
Of small birdes there came a great flight,
And dowe quickly on the leaues light,

On euery side about me where I stode,
Right marvellous and a great multitude.

Among the whiche a Swallow loude can cry,
On that Hawthorne hie in the toppe sitting,
O ye birdes all heare me by and by,
Ye shall well know, and ye will ponder one thing,
Where danger is or perill appearing,
It is great wisdom to prouide before,
It to auoyde for feare it hurt you more.

Sir Swallow (quoth the Larke againe) and lough,
What haue ye seene, that causeth you to dread?
See ye ponder churle, quoth she, beyonde you plough,
Fast sowing hempe, and good Line seede:
Ponder lint will grow in little time in deede,
And thereof will this churle his nettes make,
Under the whiche he thinkes vs to take.

Therefore my counsell is when that he is gone,
At euen, and with our nayles sharpe and small,
Out of the earth scrape that seede anone,
And eat it vp, for if it growes we shall,
Haue cause to wepe hereafter one and all,
See we remedy it with Instante,
Nam leuius ledit quicquid preuidimus ante.

For Clerkes sayes, it is not sufficient,
To consider that is before thine eye,
But prudence is an inward argument,
That makes a man, prouide and fore see,

What good, what euill, is lyke for to be,
 Of euery thing behold the finall ende,
 And so from perill, the better him defend.

The Larke laughing thus the Swallow to scozne,
 Sayd she slyt long befoze the net,
 The childe is soone broke that is vnbozne,
 All groweth not that in the ground is set,
 The necke to floupe when it the stroke shall get,
 Is soone inough: death on thee fast fall,
 Thus mocked they the Swallow one and all.

Despising thus hir holosome document,
 The fowles forthwith tooke their flight anon,
 Some with their make into the field went:
 And some againe are to the greene wood gon,
 Thus vnder the tree they left me alone,
 I tooke my clubbe, and homeward colde it cary,
 As fearefully as I had seene some Fayry.

Thus passing forth while Iune that iolly tide,
 And seedes that were sowne earst befozne,
 Were growen hie, that Hares might them hide,
 And also the Quayles craking in the cozne,
 I moued forth betwixt midday and mozne,
 Vnto the hedge vnder the Hawthorne greene,
 Where I befoze, the foresayd birdes had seene.

And as I stode by aduenture and case,
 The same birdes as I haue sayd you ere,
 I hope, bicause it was their haunting place,

More of succour, or yet more solitaire,
They light adowne : and when they lighted were,
The Swallow againe put forth a piteous pime,
And sayd, woe is him cannot beware in time.

O blinde byzdes and full of negligence,
Unmindfull of your owne prosperitie,
Lift vp your sight and take good aduertence,
Looke to that lint that growes on yond le,
That same is the thing forsoth, that we,
As I sayd earst, should roote out and kill,
Now is it lint : we can do it none ill.

Go yet while it is tender and small,
And pull it vp, let it no more increase,
My hart grones, my body quakes with all,
Thinking on it I may not sleepe in peace,
They cried all, and bad the Swallow cease,
And sayd yonder lint hereafter will do good,
For lyne seedes to little birdes are fode.

We thinke when that yonder lint seede is ripe,
To make vs feasts and fill vs with the seed,
Mauger the churle, and on it sing and prepe,
Well quoth the Swallow friends hardly bect,
Do as ye will, but certayne soze I dread,
Hereafter ye shall finde all sowre, and not sweete,
When ye are spitted on the churles spitte.

The owner of yond lint a fowler is,
Right crafty, and full of subtilty,

His pray full seldome time will he mis,
 But if we birdes all, the warer be,
 Full many of our kinne he hath caused to die,
 And thought it but a sport to spill theyr blood,
 God keepe me fro him, and the holy roode.

These small birdes hauing but litle thought,
 Of perill that might fall by aduenture,
 The counceill of the Swallow set at nought,
 But tooke their flight and forth together fure,
 Some to the wood, some marched to the moure,
 I tooke my staffe, when this was sayd and done,
 And walked home for it drew neare to none.

The Lint riped, the Carle puld the lyne,
 Rippilt the bowels, and in boundles it set,
 It steeped in water and dzyed it fine,
 And with a betell knocked it, and bet,
 So swingled it well and hekled it in the flēt,
 His wife it span, and twinde it into threed,
 Of which the fowler nettes made in dede.

The Winter come, the wicked winde can blow,
 The woodes greene were faded with the weate,
 All things decayde with frostes and with snow,
 Puddles and lakes made sliddery with sleate,
 The fowles saye for fault they fall on feate,
 On homes bare it was no boote to byde,
 But bied them to houses them to hyde.

Some in the barne, some in the stake of cozne,

Their

They? lodging tooke and made theri residence,
The fowler saw, and great othes hath swozne,
They should be tane truly for they? expence,
His nettes then he set with great diligence,
And in the snow he shovled hath a playne,
And belcd it all ouer with chaf agayne.

These small byzdes seying this chaf were glad,
Thinkyng it had bene cozne, they lited downe,
But of the nettes no inkling they had,
Nor of the fowlers false intention,
To scrape & seeke their meate they made them bowne,
The Swallow on a little branch neare by,
Dreading some guyle, thus lowd to them can cry.

Into that chaf scrape whiles your nayles blede,
There is no cozne ye labour all in vayne,
Trowe ye yond churle for pittty wil you see,
Na, na, he hath it here layde for a trayne,
Remoue I reade you, or els ye wil be slayne,
His nettes he hath set full prively,
Reddy to draw: in tyme beware, or ye die.

Great folies in him that puts in daunger,
His life, his honour, for a thing of nought,
Great follies in him, that will not gladly heare,
Counsell in time, while it auayle him mought.
Great folies in him, that hath nothing in thought,
But things present: and after what may fall,
Nor of the ende hath no memoriall.

These small birdes for hunger famisht neare,
 Full busily scraping for to seeke their foode,
 The counsell of the Swallow would not heare,
 Suppose their labour did them litle good.
 When she their foolish hartes vnderstood
 So indurate, vp in a tree she flew,
 With that this churle ouer them his nettes drew,
 Alas it was great pittie for to see,
 That bloudy Boucher to beate the birdes downe,
 And ah to heare, when they wist well to die,
 Their carefull crie and lamentation,
 Some with a staffe he strake to earth on sowne:
 Of some the head he strake, of some he brake the crag:
 Some halfe on liue he stopt into his bagge.
 And when the Swallow saw that they were dead,
 Lo(quothe she) these chances do arise,
 On them that will not take counsell nor head,
 Of prudent men, or Clerkes that are wise,
 This great perill I tolde them more than thysse:
 Now are they dead, wo is me therefore,
 She tooke hir flight, and I saw hir no more.

Moralitie,

A worthy folke, & sope that noble Clerke,
 A poet worthy to be Laweate,
 When he had leasure, from more autentike werke,
 With

With other mo, this forsayd fable wrote,
 Whiche at this time may well be applicate,
 To very good morall edification,
 hauing ay sentence according to reason.

This carle, and bond of gentry spoliare,
 Sowing this chaf, the small byrdes to sla,
 It is the fende, whiche fro the angelike state,
 Exiled was as false Apostata,
 Whiche day and night werieth not to ga,
 Sowing poyson in euery wicked thought,
 In mans soule, which Christ ful deere hath bought.

And when the soule, as into earth the seede,
 Giues consent vnto delectation,
 Then wicked thoughts begins for to breede,
 In deadly sinne whiche is damnation,
 Reason is blinded with affection,
 And carnall lust, growes full greene and gay,
 Thzough consuetude haunted from day to day.

Proceeding forth by vse and consuetude,
 Then sinne ripens, and shame is set aside,
 The feende makes his nettes sharp and rude,
 And vnder pleasaunce priuily them hide,
 Then on the fild he soweth chaf full wide,
 Whiche is but dross and very vanitie,
 Of fleshly lust and vayne prosperitie.

These little birdes, wretches we may call,
 Still scraping in this worldes vayne pleasaunce,

Greedy to gather goodes tempoꝛall,
 Which as the chaffe oꝛ dꝛoffe without substance,
 Little of auayle, and full of variannce,
 Like to the dust, befoze the blast of winde,
 Which whisks away and maketh wꝛetches blinde.

This Swallow whiche scaped is the snare,
 The holy preacher well may signifie,
 Exhorting folke to walke and ay beware,
 From the nettes of our wicked enimie,
 Who slepeth not but euer is ready,
 When wꝛetches in this world chaffe do scape,
 To dꝛaw his net, then they may not escape.

Alas what care, what weeping is and moe,
 When soule and body departed are in twayne?
 The body to the woꝛmes kitchin doth goe,
 The soule to fire to euerlasting payne,
 What helpes then this chaffe, these goodes bayne,
 When thou art put to Lucifers hyze,
 And brought to Hell, and hangd in the fyze?

These hid nettes soꝛ to perceyue and fer,
 And this soꝛy chaffe, is wise vnderstanding:
 Best is beware in most prosperitie,
 Foꝛ in this world there is nothing lasting,
 There is nonian certayne how long shalbe his being,
 How long his life shall last, noꝛ how shalbe his end:
 Noꝛ after his death whether he shall wend.

Pꝛay we therefore whyle we are in this life,

for foure things: the first, fro sinne remoue,
 The second is, fro all warre and strife,
 The third is, perfect charitie and loue,
 The fourth thing is and most for our behoue,
 That is in blisse with Angels to be fellowe,
 And thus endeth the preaching of the Swallowe.

F I N I S.

The mery tale of the wolf,
*that wold haue had, the Neckhering through the
 wyles of the Foxe, thnt beguiled the Carrier.*

Whylom there wound in a wilbernes,
 (As mine Authoz expressly can declare)
 A rauenyng Wolf, that liued vpon purches,
 On all beasts and made him well to fare,
 Was none so bigge, about him he would spare,
 And he weare hongry, other for fauour or fayth,
 But in his wozath, he wozied them to death.

So happened him in rouing as he went,
 To meete a fore in mids of the way,
 Laurence him first sawe and feard to be shent,
 And with a beke, he bad the Wolf good day,
 Welcome to me (quoth he) thou russet gray,
 So bowed he downe, and tooke him by the hand,

Rise

Rise by Laurence I giue thee leaue to stand.

Where hast thou bene this long out of my sight?
 Thou shalt beare office, and my steward be,
 For thou can knap downe Capons in the night,
 And lucking lowe thou can make hennies die,
 Sir (sayd the Foxe) that agrees not for me,
 And I am redde, if they see me as farre,
 At my figure, beast and birdes will skarre.

Ray (quoth the Wolfe) thou can in couert creepe,
 Upon thy belly, and catch them by the head,
 And make a sudden shoue vpon a sheepe,
 So with thy weapons weary him to dead,
 Sir (sayd the Foxe) ye know my robe is read,
 And therefore there will no beast abide me,
 Though I would be so false as fox to hide me.

Yes (quoth the Wolfe) through hedge & through bush,
 How can thou bowe to come to thine intent,
 Sir (sayd the Foxe) ye wote well how I pushe,
 And long fro them they will feeble my sent,
 Then will they escape, suppose I should be thent,
 And I am ashamed to come behind them,
 Into the field though I should sleeping find them.

Ray, quoth the Wolfe, thou can come on the winde,
 For euery winke forsooth thou hast a wyle,
 Sir, sayd the Fox, that beast ye might call blinde,
 That might not scape then fro me a mile,
 How might I one of them that wayes beguyle?

My tipped two eares, and my two grey eyne,
Makes me be knownen, where I was neuer seene.

Then, sayd the Wolf, Laurence I heare thee lie,
And castes for perillis thy doings to defend,
But all thy sayings shall not auayle thee,
About the bush with wayes though thou wend,
Wply wil beguile himself at the latter end,
To bowe at bidding, and bide not while thou best,
Therefore I giue thee counsell for the best.

Sir, sayd the Fox, it is now Lent ye see,
I cannot fishe for wetting of my feet,
To take a banstake, though we both should die,
I haue no other craft to winne my meate,
But were it Easter that men should pultry eat,
As Kees, Lambe, or Capons then to ply,
To beare your office I would full gladly.

Thē, sayd the Wolf, in wꝛath weenst thou th wyles,
And with thy many mockes me to mate,
It is an old dogge doubtlesse that thou beguiles:
Thou thinkes to draw the straw before the cat.
Sir, sayd the Foxe God wote I meane not that,
For and I did, it weare well donne that yee,
In a hempen halter had tied me to a tree.

But now I see he is a feole parfay,
That with his master falles in reſoning,
I did but feele what that ye would say,
God wote my minde was on another thing,

I shall fulfill in all things your bidding,
 What ever ye charge me other night or dayes,
 Well, quoth the Wolfe) I heare thee what thou sayest.
 But yet I will, thou make to me an othe,
 For to be true at all times and tyde,
 Sir (sayd the Foxe) let no worde make ye wroth,
 For now I see that you haue me in dread,
 Yet shall I sweare suppose it be nought made:
 By Iupiter, and on payne of my head,
 I shall be true to you, whyle I be dead.

With that a Carrier with pannier and creples,
 Came singing forward: and Laurence could him spee
 The Foxe the smell of the fresh herring feeles,
 And to the Wolfe he roundes priuely
 Sir ponder are herring the carrier carries by,
 Therefore my counsell is to see for some wayes,
 To get some fish against these fasting dayes.

Since I am steward, I would we had some stufte,
 And ye are siluer sicke, I know right weel,
 Though we would begge, yond very churlish chufte,
 He will not giue vs a herryng of his crell,
 Before the churle on knees though we would kneele,
 But yet I trow full quickly ye shall see,
 If I can craft to bleare the carles eye.

Sir, one thing is, and we get of you self,
 Ye must take trauayle and diligent be,
 For he that will not labour, and help himself,

In these dayes he is not worth a flee,
 For I thinke to worke as busie as a bee,
 And ye shall follow a little afterwart,
 And gather vp herring, and that shalbe your part.

With that he cast a compasse farre about,
 And layde him downe in mids of the way,
 As he weare dead he scynd without doubt,
 And then all a long unlikely he lay,
 The while he turned vp of his eyne tway,
 His tong out hange a handbreath of his head,
 And still he lay, as stife as he were dead.

The Carrier found the fore and he was fayne,
 And to him selfe thus softly can he say,
 At the next bayte in faith ye shal be slayne
 And of your skinne, I shall make mittens tway,
 He lept full lighty aboute him where he lay,
 And all the trace he tript on his toes,
 As he had hard a piper play he goes.

Hearc lieth the Deuill, quoth he, as big as a hogge,
 Such a fellow saw I not this seuen yeare,
 I trow ye haue bene tyzed with some dogge,
 That makes you lie so still withouten scare,
 Sir fore in faith you are well welcome heare,
 It is some mines blessing as farre as I know,
 For poultry picking that light on you I trowe.

There shall no peler for purse ne yet for gloues,
 Nor yet for points picke your pelft from me.

I shall of it make coufes to my loues,
To keepe my handes warme where ere I be,
To Flaunders shall it neuer sayle the sea,
With that in hy he tooke him by the heels,
And with one swage he flange him on his creels.

So by the head the hoxse in hast he tooke,
The Fore that saw, as crafty theefe alone,
And with his teeth the stopple out he thooke,
And so the herryng thzew out one by one,
Out of the creels he thzew them doونه anon,
The WOLF was ware, and tooke vp speedily,
The Carrier sang, hunt is vp, vp vpon hie.

Yet at a byooke the Carrier lokt aboute,
With that the Fore lept quyte the creels fra,
The Carrier would haue raught the For a rout,
But all for nought, he wan his spurs that day,
Then with a shoute thus can the Carrier say,
Abide, and of neckherring shalt haue best,
Is worth my hoxse, the creels, and all the rest.

Now, quoth the Fore, I Wzew me and we meet,
I hard what thou hight to do with my skinne,
Thy hands shall neuer in thy coufes heet,
And thou weare hanged carle and all thy kinne,
Do forth thy market by me thou shalt not winne,
And sell thy herring thou hast there, for hie pryce,
Els thou shalt winne nought on thy marchandice.

The Carrier trembled for anger as he stood,

I am well worthy (quoth he) to lose yond stike,
That had nought in my hand to do so much good,
As staffe or sticke, this fellow for to strike:
With that he lightly lepte out ouer the dike,
And cut downe a staffe, for he was angry,
That heauy was, and of the greene holly.

With that the Fore vnto the Wolfe could go,
And fond him by the herrings where he lies,
Sir (sayd he then) haue I not playde the throw:
A wight man wanted neuer and he were wise,
I hardy hart his hande for to surpryse,
(Then sayd the Wolfe) thou art a barne full bold,
And wise at will, in good time be it tolde.

But what was that the Carle cried on him,
And shooke his hand, quoth he, didst thou not here?
Sir (sayd the Fore) that can I tell truly,
He sayd his neck herrings were in there,
Knowes thou that herryng: ye sir with good chere,
And at the creele mouth I had thryce without doubt,
The weyght whereof nere pluckt my tuskes out.

Now sothly sir, might we that herring haue,
It would be fith to vs these forty dayes:
(Then sayd the Wolfe) now so God me saue,
But to be there I would giue all my clayes,
To see if that my weapons might it rayes,
Sir (sayd the Fore) God wote I wisht you ofte,
When that my strength might not beare it alofte.

It is a fide of Salmon as it were,
 And coloured much like the Partrich eye,
 It is worth all the herrings ye haue there,
 Pee and wee had it sir, is it worth such three,
 Then, sayd the Wolfe, what counsell giues thou me?
 Sir, sayd the Foxe, worke after my recde,
 And ye shall haue it, and take ye no dzeede.

First ye must cast a compasse farre about,
 So lay you downe in middes of the way,
 Both head, feete, and tayle, ye must stretch out,
 Hang forth your tong, and cloze your eyne tway,
 And see your head, on a harde place ye lay,
 And doubtc ye no perill, that may appeere,
 But hold you close, when that the Carle comes neere.
 And though ye see a staffe haue ye no doubtc,
 But holde you wounders still, in that steebe,
 And looke your eyne be close as they were out,
 And see that ye shrinke neyther soote, nor head,
 Then will the hoysen Carle trow ye be dead,
 And so in hast, will take you by the heeles,
 As he did me, and swinge you in his creeles.

Now, quoth the Wolfe, I sweare thee by my thrift,
 I feare the Carrier carle he will me beare:
 Sir, sayd the Foxe, on losse he will you lift,
 Upon his creeles, and do him little deare:
 But one thing sothly I dare to you sweare,
 Get ye that herring in some place sicker,

of Elope the Phrygian.

Ye shall not neede go a fishing more while **Carrier.**

I shall say in principio ouer you,
And crosse your corps fro top to the ta,
Wend when you will I dare warrant you,
That ye shall die no sudden death this day.
With that the Wolfe girt him vp, and away,
And cast a compasse befoze the Carrier late,
So layd him downe in the way, or he came late.
He layd the side of his head both hard and sad,
So stretcht his forefeete fro him and his head,
And hang his tong forth as the fore him bad,
Also still he lay as he had bene dead,
Caring nothing of the Carles fauour nor fret,
But euer vpon the neckherring he thinks,
And quite forgets the fore and all his wifelines.
With that the Carrier wauering as the winde,
Came ridiug on the lode for it was light,
Thinking on the fore that was behinde,
Upon what wise, reuerged on him he might,
And at the last on the Wolfe he hath the sight,
Where he in length lay stretched in the gate,
But if he lighted downe, or not; God wait.

Softly he sayd, I was beguyled once,
Be I beguyl'd twice, I by my we be bathe,
That euill now shall light vpon thy bones,
He should haue had it that hath done me the skath,
On he lifted the staffe for he was wrath;

**And hitting with such will upon the head,
That welneere he sowned to the dead.**

**Thzee battes he boze, oz he his fecte might finde,
But yet the WOLF was wight and ran away,
He might not see, he was so very blinde,
Nor wot readily whether it were night oz day.
The fore beheld that seruice where he lay,
And leught aloft, when he the WOLF so sees,
Both deafe and stonnysh, fall sowning on his knees.**

**He that with reason cannot be content,
But couetes all, is likely all to lose:
The fore when that he saw the WOLF was shent,
Sayd to himself, these herrings with me goes,
I lye, oz els he after got blowes,
That founde such wayes his maister for to greue,
With all the fish thus Laurence took his leue.**

**The WOLF he was, welneere done to dead,
That vneth with his life away he ran,
With the Bastianado, broken was his head,
The fore into his denne soone drew him than,
That had betrayed his maister, and the man,
The one wanted the herrings out of his creeles,
The others bloud it ranne downe by his heeles.**

Moralitie.

**This tale is mingled with Moralliter,
As I shall shew somewhat of that I case,**

The

The Foxe, vnto the world may likened bee,
The rauening Wolfe vnto man, but leaue
The Carrier death, whom all men do despise,
That euer take life, through course of kinde must die,
As man and beast, and fowles aloft that flie.

The world ye wote, is steward to the man,
Whiche maketh him haue no minde of deathe,
But lettes for winning all the craftes he can.
The herring, I liken vnto the gold so rare,
Whiche made the Wolfe in perill put his head,
Right so the golde, maketh landes and cities
With warre be wasted, dayly as men leaue.

And as the Foxe, dissembling with guile,
Made the Wolfe went to haue worship for a while:
Right so this worlde with baynegloze for a while,
Flattereth with folke as they should die heere:
Yet suddenly men seeth it oft differ
With them, that thinke to all at length the better,
Death comes behind, and kips them by the necke.

The getting of golde makes many to blinde,
That settes on avarice theyr felicitie,
That they forget the Carrier comes behind,
To strike them off, what state so ere they bee.
What is more darke than blinde prosperitie?
Wherefore, I counsell sicke men to haue minde,
Of the Neckherring, interpret in this kinde.

The excellent tale of the wyly

Laurence Foxe, that beguylde the covetous crafty

Wolfe, with the shadow of the Moone.

In clere dayes as Esop can declare,
 There was a husband man which had a plot to
 His use was an in morning to rise care,
 So it happened him, in stirring tyme of yeare,
 Early in the morning to follow forth his feare,
 Unto the plough only his gadman and he,
 His Dren he blessed, with Benedicite.

The driner cryed hop, pong, on bright,
 Well drawnen my pointers so spake them fayre,
 The Dren were lusty yong and light,
 And for scarcenesse they layde the sorrow for payre:
 The husbanc then wore angry as a hare,
 So cryed and call his pottell and great stones,
 The Wolfe, quoth he, mought haue ye all at ones,
 But yet the Wolfe was surer than he wend,
 For in a bush he lay, and Laurence bathe,
 Among rough shrub was at the furthest end,
 And heard the bright, then Laurence laughd full rash,
 To take yond offer, quoth he, it were no skath:
 Well quoth the Wolfe, I hold thee herfyn hand,
 The Carles word, as he were king shall stand,
 The Dren warte more, rily at the last,

So after they lov'd when it was somewhat late,
The husband homeward with his cattell past;
Then soone the Wolfe came hopping in his gate,
Before the Dren, and shope to make debate:
The husband saw him and was somewhat agast,
And backward with his beasts, would have past.

The Wolfe sayd whether dzyues thou this pray?
I challengit; for none of them are thine,
The man that was in a felloe fray,
And soberly to the Wolfe, answered sine:
Sir by my soule these Dren are all mine,
Therefore I praye, now why ye shoulde shoy me,
Considering I neuer, offended you truly.

The Wolfe sayd Earle, dost thou not give this Dyzt,
Early, when thou was eating on yon bank?
And is there any thing more free than gift?
This cattell thou wilt lose the churche thank,
Far better tis freely for to give a plauke,
Nor be compelled by force, to give a mart,
I ye on that gift, that comes not with good hart.

Sir, quoth the husband, a man may say in greefe,
A woꝛde and call againe, is he advise and see,
I promise to steale, am I therefore a theefe?
God forbeare, all heights should holden bee,
Gave I my hand of obligation, quoth he,
O, haue ye witnesse, or wyting here to shew;
Sir trouble me not, but goe and seeke the law.

Carle, quoth the Wolfe, a Foxe and he be left;
That shyneth for shame, or doubt to be reproved,
His word is as sure as his feil:

Fye on that man that is not true and loyde,
Thy argument is false, and eke contrarie:
For it is sayd in Prouerbe, ye may see,
All other vertues is nought worth a flec.

Sir sayd the husband, remember this thing,
A true man is not taken at half a word here,
I may say, and vnlay, I am not a king:
Where is your witnesse, I promise you this geare?
Then sayde the Wolfe, therefore he shall come nere,
Laurence(quoth he) come out of that shawe,
And say nothing but as thou heard and sawe.

Laurence came luring, for he loude neuer light,
And soone appeared before them in that place,
The man laughed not, when he sawe that sight:
Laurence(quoth the Wolfe) thou must declare the case,
Whereof we shall heere the truth in short space,
I haue called thee true witnesse to beare,
What heard thou, this man promise me here.

Sir sayd the Tod, I cannot hastily,
So soone as now giue sentence finall,
But would you both submit you here to me,
To stande to my decree perpetuall,
To please both I should proue, if it may fall:
Well(quoth the Wolfe) I am content for me,

The man sayd, so am I, how euer it be.

Then shew they forth and alledge without fable,
And both p[ro]p[os]es they: plea to him compleet,
(Quoth Laurence) now I am a iudge amiable,
Ye shalbe swozne to stand at my decreet,
Whether hereafter ye thinke it sower or sweete:
The Wolf put forth his foote, the man his hande:
And on the Cods tayle swozne they are to stande.

Then took the Tod the man a little beside,
And sayd to him, friend, thou art in trouble brought:
The Wolf will not forgine thee one ore hide,
Yet would my selfe sayne help thee and I might,
But I am loth to hurt my conscience in sight,
Lose not thy quarell in thine owne defence,
This will not through withouten great expence.
Seest thou not bybes beares all the sway now?
And giftes makes crooked matters hold euen?
Sometimes an henne, saues a man a fow,
All are not holy that beaues their handes to heauen:
Sir sayde the man, ye shall haue fire or seuen
Right of the fattest hennes of all the flocke,
I compt not all the rest, leaue me the Cocke.

I am a iudge, quoth Laurence, then and lough,
There is no bybes shall barre me fro the right,
I may take hennes and Capons well inough,
For God is gone to sleepe as for this night,
Such small things are not seene in his sight,

**These hennies, quoth he, shall make thy matter sure,
With empty hand no man should hauekes lure.**

**Agreed thus, then Laurence took his leue,
As to the Wolfe he went into a linge,
So pryuely he pluckt him by the sleue,
Is this in earnest, quoth he, ye aske such thing,
Nay by my soule I trow it be in testing,
Then sayde the Wolfe, Laurence why sayst thou so?
Thou heardst his promise thy selfe not long ago.**

**The height (quoth he) the man made at the plough,
Is that the cause why ye the cattell craue?
Was he in iell (sayd Laurence then) and lough;
Sir by the reede me thilkes that now ye rane,
The Deuill at all one taylor that ye shall haue;
Thinke you He take vpon my conscience,
To do so poore a man as he offence?**

**Yet haue I commoned with the Carle, quoth he,
We are accorded vpon this couenant;
Write of all claymes so ye will make him free;
Ye shall a Cabbock haue into your hand,
That such a one shall not be in all this land;
For it is a Sommer cheese both fresh and good,
He sayth it weyes a stone downe by the rood.**

**Is that thy counsell, quoth the Wolfe, I do,
That ynde Carle for a cheese should be free?
Yea by my soule and I wote twozne you to;
Ye should no other counsell haue for me,**

For goe ye to the most extremitie,
It will not wisme you worth a withered nepe,
Sir trow ye not I haue a soule to keepe?

Well, quoth the Woff, it is against my will,
That yond cattel for one cheese should goe quite;
Sir (quoth the Wod) take it not in ill,
For by my soule yout selfe had all the witte:
Then, sayd the Wollfe, I hyde no more to flitte,
But I would see the Cabbage of such pyze,
For, sayd the Wod, he tolde me where it lies.

Then hand in hand, they walked to an hill,
The husband towards his house hath take the way,
For he was glad he scaped from their ill.
And on his fecte did walke whilence did the day:
Now will we turne vnto the other way,
Through woods and wast the flocke forth can fore,
From bush to bush, till neere midnight end more.

Laurence was then remembryng vpon wylkes,
And intrulles, the Wollfe for to beguile,
That he had promysed a cheese, he forthinkes;
Yet at the last he findeth forth one wyle,
That to himselfe softly could he synple;
The Wollfe sayes, Laurence thou playest belly blinde,
We seeke all night, but nothing can we finde.

Sir, sayd the Wod, we are at it almost,
Softe you a little, and ye shall see it soone,
Then to a manour place they hied in hast,

The night was light and fayre shone the moone:
Then to a dzy well these denyors both are come,
Where that two buckets hang stuerall, it was so,
As one came up, an other downe would go.

The shadowes of the dyone shone in the well,
Sir, sayd Laurence, once ye shall finde me tell,
Now see ye not the cheere that I you tell,
White as any milke and round as any stele,
He hangd it yonder that no man should it stele,
Sir trust me well, the cabbok ye see hing,
Might be a present to a Roide or King.

Ray, quoth the Woll, might I this cabbok haue,
On the dzy land as I it yonder see,
I would quite clayme the Earle of all I craue:
His durty Dye I care not for a flur,
You were more meete for such a man as mer:
Laurence, quoth he, leape in the bucket soone,
And I shall holde the one, while thou go downe.

Laurence girde downe both soone and suttly,
The other bode about and held the stayle,
It is so much, quoth Laurence, it maisters me,
On all my toes it hath not left one nayle:
Ye must needs helpe upwarde, and it hayle,
Leape in the other bucket man hastily,
And come soone downe and helpe me by and by.

Then lightly in the bucket leapt the Robone,
His weight strapt made the other end awke,

The God came merily by, the Wolf yeed downe,
Then angerly the Wolf upon him cryes,
I conning thus downeward, why thou upward byest,
Sir, quoth the Fox, thus fares it oft in towne,
As one comes by, so goeth another downe.

Then to the ground seone went the Wolf in hast,
The God lept on land as blyeth as any bell,
And left the Wolf in water to the wast,
Who halde him out I wote not of the well:
Here endes the text I haue no more to tell,
Yet may men finde some good Moralitye,
In this sentence, though it a Fable bee.

Moralitie.

The Wolf I liken to a wicked man,
Whiche doth the poore oppresse in ery place:
And pykes at them all quarels that he can,
By rigour, rape, and other wickednesse,
The fore the feend, I call into this case,
Egging all men to runne vnrightrous raynes,
Thinking thereby to locke him in his chaynes.

The husband may be cald a godly man,
With whom the fiend fault finds (as Clerkes recorde)
Busse to tempt him with all wayes that he can:
The hennes are workes, that fro firme faith proceeds,
Where such sprouts spreds, & evil spirit there not spreds
But

But wends vnto the wicked man againe,
That he hath lost his travell is full fayne.

The woodes waste, wherein was the Wolfe wilde,
Are wicked ritches, which all men gapes to get,
Who trustes in such trustery, are oft beguylde,
For Hammon may be called the Devils net,
Whiche Satanas, for all sinfull folke hath set:
Such proude pleasure who sets his trust therein,
Without spectall grace lightly can out wine.

The cheese may be called couetise,
Whiche blometh broade in many mens eye,
Woe worth the well of that wicked vice,
For it is all but fraude and fantasie,
Driving all men to leape into that buttery,
That downeward drawes vnto the payne of hell,
Christ keepe all Christians from that wicked well.

F I N I S.

¶ The mery tale of the wolfe and the Weather.

Whylom there was, as Esop can report,
A Shepherd dwelling by a forrest neare,
Whiche had a Dogge that did him great comfort,
Full ware he was to keepe his fold fro feare,
That neither Wolfe nor wilde cat durst appeare,

No: fore on fildes, no: yet no other beast,
 But he them slewe, o: chased at the least.

So happened it (as euery beast must sleepe)
 This Dogge of suddon sicknesse to be dead,
 But then God wote the keeper of the sheepe,
 For very wo wore wanner than the wead:
 Alas, quoth he, now see I no remed,
 To saue these selly beasts that I now keepe,
 For why the Wolfe will weary all my sheepe.

It would haue made a mans heart soze to see,
 The selly shepheard make such lamentation,
 Now is my dearling dead alas, quoth he,
 For now to begge my bread I may be botome,
 With pike staffe and with skrip fro towne to towne,
 For all the beasts befoze that bandoned weare,
 Will now retorne againe, and all my sheepe to teare.

With that a Weather stoutly stood on fote,
 Master, quoth he, make mery and be light,
 To breake your hart for bale, it is no boote,
 For one dead Dogge ye must not take such flight,
 Go fetch him hither and slay his skinne ere night,
 So sow it on me: and looke that it be meete,
 Both head, and necke, body, tayle, and feete.

Then will the Wolfe beleue that I am hee,
 For I shall follow him fast where ere he fare,
 All hole the charge here I take vpon mee,
 Your sheepe to keepe at midday late and rayze,

And

And he pursue, by God, I shall not spare,
To follow him as fast as did your dogge,
So that I warrant, ye shall not want a hogge.

Then sayd the Shepherd, this comes of a good wit,
Thy counsell is both good, faithfull, and true,
Who sayes a shepes a wretch, they lie of it:
With that in hast the dogges skinne of he flew,
And on the Weepe right softly could it sew,
Then was the wether wanton of his weed,
Now of the Wolf, quoth he, I haue no need.

In all things he counterfayte the dogge,
For all the night he stode and toke no sleepe,
So that long time there wanted not an hogge,
So ware he was, and watchfull them to keepe,
That Laurence durst not look vpon a sheepe,
For and he did, he followed him so fast,
That of his life he made him all agast.

Was nother Wolf, wildecat, nor yet Ted,
Durst come within the boundes all aboute:
But he would chase them both throw rough and snore,
These baylefull beastes had of their liues such doubt,
For he was great and seemed to be stoute,
That euery beast did dread him and eke feare,
Without the wood that none durst once appeare.

It happened there an hungry Wolf to lye,
Out throw his sheepe where as they did lie,
I shall one haue, quoth he, what euer betyde,

Though

Though I be wried, or els I will die:
With that a Lambe he got by and by,
The rest start vp, for they were all agast,
But (God wote) if the Weather folowed fast.
Went neuer hound moze hastily from the hand,
When he was runnyng most rashly forthe roe,
Nor went this weather ouer mosse and strand,
And stopped neither at banke, buske, nor bzo,
But folowed still, ay fiercely on his foe,
With suche a drift, while dust & dirte ouerdraue him,
And made a vow to God that he would haue him.
With that the Wolfe let out his tayle at length,
For he was hungry, and it dretwe neare euen,
And shope him for to runne with all his strength,
When he the weather so neare comming had scene,
He dread his life, and he had taken bene,
Therefore he spared neither buske nor bogge,
For well he knew the kindnesse of the Dogge.
To make him light he cast the Lambe him fro,
So leyt oze leys & ran thzough durt and myze,
Nay (quoth the Weather) in fayth we part not so,
It is not the Lambe, but thee that I desire,
I shall come neere for now I see thee tyze,
The Wolfe ranne still and durst not looke behind him,
But ay the neerer the weather he could winde him.
Sone after that he folowed him so neare,
While that the Wolfe for feare befild the field,

G.

And

And left the way, and ran through bushy and byer,
And thought within the woodes him for to shield,
He ran still restless, or els he must needs yeeld,
The weather followed him out and in,
While that a byer bush, tare rudely off the skin.

The Wolfe was ware and blinked him behind,
And saw the weather come flinging through y^e byer,
So saw the dogge skin hanging on the lynd,
May (quoth he) is this ye that is sonnetre?
Right now a hound, and now white as a fryer,
I fled ope farre, and I had knowen the case,
To God I vow that ye shall rewe this race.

What was the cause ye gaue me such a catch?
With that in hast he took him by the horne,
For all your wyles, you met once with your match,
Suppose ye laught me all this yeare to scorn,
For what treason haue ye this dogges skin borne?
Master quoth he, but euen to play with you,
I you require that ye none other trow.

Is this your iesting in earnest then, quoth he,
For I am very fearful and also fote,
Come backe againe and I shall let you see,
Then where the way was betrayed he him byete,
Whether call ye this fayze play or not?
To set your maister in so fell asray,
The which for feare thus filed hath the way.

Thys by my soule ye made me looke behinde,

And

Of hope that in y^e game.

And vpon my hotches my sinewes may be seene,
For feardnesse full ofte I fild the winde,
Now is this ye: nay but a Dogge I weene,
My thinkes your teeth ore woit to be so keene,
Blessed be the bushe, that rest you your array,
Els flying bursten had I bene this day.

Sir (quoth the weather) suppose I ran in hy,
My minde was neuer to do your person ill,
The fear gettes the folower commonly,
In play or earnest, proue who so euer will,
Since I but played, be gracious me vntill,
And I shall make my friendes to blisse your bones,
For sure good seruaunt will helpe his master once.
I haue oft times bene set in great affray,
But by the roode so rayde yet was I neuer,
As thou hast made me with thy pety play,
I shot behind when thou ore tooke me euer,
But certaynly now shall we not differ,
Then by the neckebone surely he him tooke,
Or euer he ceast, and it in sunder shooke.

Moralitie.

Sope that Poet first father of this fable,
Wrote this parable whiche is conuenient,
Bicause the sentence was fratefull and agreeable,
In moralitic examplatiue prudent,

Whose problemes bene very excellent,
 Through similitudes of figures to this day,
 Giues doctrine to the readers of it for ay.

Here may thou see that ritches of array,
 Will cause poore men presumptuous for to bee,
 Then thinke to holde of none be they as gay,
 But counterfayte a Lorde in euery degree,
 Out of knowledge in pryde they clime so hie,
 That they will forbear their better in no stead,
 Till some man turne, their heeles over their head.

Right so in seruice other some exceeds,
 And they haue wages, wealth and cherishing,
 That they will be lightly Lordes in deedes,
 And looke not to their bloud and offspr yng,
 But yet none knowes how long that rule will ring,
 But he was wise that had his sonne consider,
 Beware in wealth, for the hall bench is right slyder.

Therefore I counsell men of euery state,
 To know them selfe, and whom they should forbear,
 And fall not with their better in debate,
 Suppose they be as gallant in their geare:
 It cometh not a seruant to holde warre,
 Nor clime so hie, while he fall of the lather,
 But thinke vpon the Wolfe and on the Weather.

F I N I S.

The

The wofull tale of the cruell

Wolfe and the innocent Lambe.

A Cruell Wolfe right ravenous, and fell,
Upon a time past to a river,
Descending from a rosch, unto a well,
To slake his thirste dranke of the water cleare,
So vpon chaunce, a selly Lambe came neare,
But of his foe, the Wolfe nothing he wist,
And in the streame leaped to coole his thirst.

They dranke both but not of one intent,
The Wolues thought was all on wickednes,
The silly Lambe was meeke and innocent,
Upon the ryuer in an other place,
Beneath the Wolfe, he dranke a little space,
Whyle he thought good, thinking of none ill,
The Wolfe him sawe, and rampant came him till.

With grinning teeth, and fearefull angry look,
Sayde to the Lambe, thou caytife wretched thing,
How durst thou be so bolde to file the brooke,
Where I should drinke, with thy foule flauering?
It were almes deede thee for to drawe and hing,
That should presume, with thy foule lips so vile,
To marre my drinke, and this fayre water file.

The selly Lambe quaking for very dread,
On knees fell, and sayd Sir with your leave,

Suppose I dare not say, thereof ye heere:
But by my soule, I wote ye can nought proue,
That I did aught in any, that should you greue,
Ye wote also that your accusation,
Beares no truth, and is against all reason.

Though I cannot, nature will me defend,
And of the deepe perfite experience,
All heauy things must of themselves descend,
But if some things by force make resistance,
Then may the streame in no way make ascence,
Nor runne backward: I dranke beneath you farre,
Ergo, the water therfore I did not marre.

Also my lippes, since that I was a Lani,
Touched no thing that was contagious,
But sucked milke from pappes of my Dani,
Right naturall, sweete, and also delicious,
Well, quoth the Wolfe, thy language rigorous,
Comes thee of kinde: so thy father to,
Helde me at bay, till he no more could do.

He angred me, and then I could him warne,
Within one yeare and if I broke my head,
I would be venged on him or on his barne,
For his spitefull and frowarde plead,
Then shalt doubtlesse, for his deedes be dead.
Sir it is wrong that for the fathers gilt,
The faultlesse sonne should punisht be or spilt,
Haue ye not heard what holy Scripture sayes,

Spoken

Spoken by the mouth of God almighty?
Of his owne deedes eche man shall beare the payle,
As paynes for sinne, rewardes for workes right,
For my trespasse why should my sonne haue plight?
Who did the misse let him susteyne the payne,
A, A, (quoth the Wolfe) yet answerest thou againe.

I let thee wit, when that the father offends,
I will rease none of his succession,
And of his sonnes, I well may take amends,
Unto the twenty degree descending downe,
Thy father thought to make a strong poyson,
And with his mouth, in my water did it spue,
Sir, quoth the Lam, these two are nothing true.

The law sayth, and ye will vnderstand:
There should no man for wrong or violence,
His aduersary punish at his owne hand,
Without processe of law, and euidence,
Whiche should haue leaue to make lawfull defence,
And thereupon summoned peremptorily,
For to propone contrary, or reply.

Set me a lawfull court, I shall appeare,
Before the Lion Lorde and true Justice,
And by my hand, I binde my faith right here,
That I shall byde an vnsuspect assise,
This is the law, this is the instant guise.
Ye should pretend therefore and summons make,
Against that day to giue reason and take.

Ray (quoth the Wolfe) thou wouldest intruse reason,
Where wrong and robbery should dwell in property,
That is a poynt and parte of false treason,
For to make ruth remayne with cruelty,
By his woundes, false traytour, thou shalt die,
For thy trespassse and for thy fathers deede,
With that anon he caught him by the head.

The silly Lambe could do nothing but bleate,
Sonne was he dead, the Wolfe would shewe no grace,
So dronke his bloud, and of his flesh can eat,
Whyle he was full and went his way apace,
Of this murther what shall we say alace?
Was not this ruth, was not this great pitty?
To make this silly Lambe, without fault thus to die.

Moralitie.

The poore people this Lambe may signifie,
As euil men, Merchants, and labourers,
Of whom this life is halfe a purgatory,
To winne their foode continually like misers,
The Wolfe betokeneth false extortioners,
And oppressors of poore men as wee see,
By violence, craft, or vsurie.

Thre kindes of Wolves in this world remaynes,
The first are false perverters of the lawes,
Whiche vnder, subtil termes falshead mayntaines,

As though all were Gospell that he shewes,
But without byrbe the poore he ouerthrowes,
Smothering the right, making wrong proceede,
Of such Wolues, helles fire shall be their meede.

A man of lawe let be thy fittletie,
With nycequips, and fraudes intricate:
And thinke that God in his Diuinitie,
The wrong & right of all thy workes wate,
For prayer, pryce, for hye, nor lowe estate,
Of false quarrels see thou make no defence,
Holde with the right, hurt not thy conscience.

An other kinde of Wolues rancorous,
Are mighty men, hauing full great plenty,
Whiche are so greedy and so couetous,
They will not let the poore in peace be,
Suppose he and his household both should dye
For fault of foode, no care will they make,
But ouer his head his house will they take.

A man without mercy what is in thy thought,
Where thou a Wolfe, and could vnderstande,
Thou hast inough, the poore husband right nought,
But little croppe of corne vpon a clot of lande,
(For Gods aw) how durst thou take in hande,
And thou thy Barnes full, and yet dost egge,
To put him fro his liuing, and make them to begge.

The thirde Wolfe are men of heritage,
As Lordes that haue landes by Gods leaue,

And lets out to poore men a village,
 And for the time incomes both receaue,
 Ere halfe spent the time, beareth him and berene,
 With picked quarrels, for to make him fayne,
 To sitte, or pay his income newe agayne.

His horse, his mare, he must lend to the Lord,
 To drudge and drawe, in court or in carriage,
 His seruant, or him selfe may not be spared,
 To swing, or sweat, withouten meate or wage,
 Thus how he standes in labour and bondage,
 That scantly can he purchase bere or wine,
 Course browne bread, or drinke that is thin.

Hast thou no pittie to make thy tenants sweate,
 In thy labour with faynt and hungry wome,
 And seest, hath little good to drinke and eate,
 With his meyny, at euen when he comes home,
 Thou shouldst feare for rightuous God his dome,
 For it cryes vengeance to the Heauens he,
 To make poore men worke, without meate or see.

O thou great Lorde that ritches hast and rent:
 Be not a Wolfe thus to deuoure the poore,
 Thinke that nothing cruell or violent,
 May in this worlde perpetually endure,
 Thus shouldst thou beleue, and certainly assure,
 For to oppresse thou shalt haue as great payne,
 As thou the poore, hadst wth thine owne hand slayne.

God keepe the Lambe (whiche is the innocent,)

From

From Wolves bit, and fell extortioners,
 God graunt that wangling men of false intent,
 Be manifested, and punished as offenders,
 And God as thou all righteous prayers heares,
 To saue our Queene, and giue hir harte and hand,
 All such Wolves, to banish out of the land.

F I N I S.

¶ The tale of the wofull ende of the Paddocke and the Mouse: shewing the mischiefe of dissemblers.

Upon a time (as Elope coulde report)
 A little Mouse came to a river side.
 She might not wade, hir legges were so short.
 Neyther could she swim, she had no horse to ride,
 Of very force behinde her to bide,
 And to, and fro, besides the river deepe,
 She ran crying with many piteous peepe.
 Helpe ouer, help ouer, this selly Mouse can crie,
 For Gods loue, some body ouer the brim,
 With that a Paddocke in the water by,
 Put by hir head, and on the bank gan clim,
 Whiche by nature coulde douke; and gayly swim,
 With voyce full rankt, she sayde on this manier,
 Good mornie sir Mouse what is your errand heere.

Scit

100 THE WINDMILL FABLES
Sceſt thou (quoth ſhe) of corne yonde iolly plat,
Of ripe Otes, of Barley, Peaſe, and Wheat,
I am hungry, and fayne would be therat,
But I am ſtopped by this water great,
And on this ſide I get nothing to eat,
But harde nuttes, whiche with my teeth I bite,
Where I beyond, my feaſt were much the more.

I haue no boate, here is no marriner:
And though there were, I haue no fraught to pay,
(Quoth ſhe ſiſter) let be thy heauy chere,
Do my counſell, and I ſhall finde the way,
Without Horſe, Bridge, Boate, or els gallay,
To bring thee ouer ſafely, be not affraid:
And not once to wet the compaſſe of thy beard.

I haue great wonder quoth the little Mouſe,
How can thou ſtote, without feather or finne:
This river is ſo deepe and dangerous,
He thinks, that thou ſhouldeſt drowned be therein,
Tell me therefore, what faculty or gin,
Thou haſt, to bring thee oze this water wan?
That to declare, the Paddocke thus began.

With my two feete (quoth ſhe) long and brade,
In ſteede of oze I rowe the ſtreame full ſtill,
And though the byme be perillous to wade,
Both too and fro, I rowe at mine owne will,
I may not drowne, for why my open gill,
Deuor'ds all the water I receaue,

Therefore

Therefore to browne forsothe no dread I haue.

The House beheld then hir frowning face,
Hir wrinkled cheekes, and hir lippes syde:
Hir hanging browes, and hir voyce so harce,
Hir lagring legges, and hir harsky hyde,
She ran a backe and on the Paddock cryde,
If I can any skill of Phisnomy,
Thou haste some part of false villany.

For Clerkes sayes, the inclination,
Of mans thought, proceeds commonly,
After the corporall complexion,
To good or euill as nature will apply,
A froward will and crabbed Phisnomy,
The old Prouerbe, is witnesse of this lorum,
Distortum vultum, sequitur distortio morum.

Ray (quoth the Frogge) that Prouerbe is not trew,
For saye things oft times are found infakin,
The Blaberys though they be sad of hew,
Are gathered vp when Pryniole is forsaken,
The face may fayle, to be the hartes token,
Therefore I finde this written in eche place,
Thou shouldst not iudge a man after his face.

Though I be irksom for to looke vpon,
There is no cause why I should lacked be,
Were I as fayre as iolly Absolon,
I am no causer of that great bewty,
This difference in forme and qualitie,

Almighty

Almighty God hath caused daime nature,
To print and set in euerie his creature.

Of some the face may be full flourishing,
With silken tong, and cheere right amorous,
With minde inconstant, false, and varying,
Full of deceyte, and meanes cautelous,
Let be thy preaching, quoth the hungry House)
And by what meanes now make me vnderstand,
That thou canst help me vnto yonder land.

Thou knowest, quoth she, a body that hath neede,
To help them selfe, would many wayes cast,
Therefore go get a double twined threde,
And binde thy legges to mine, with knottes fast,
I shall thee learne to swim, be not agast,
(As well as I) Is thou, then quoth the House,
To proue that play, it were right perillous.

Should I be bound, and fast, that now am free,
In hope of helpe, nay then bestow my head,
For I mought lose, both life and libertie,
If it were so who should amend the dedde?
But if thou wilt sweare to helpe me with speede,
Without fraude, or guyle, to bring me oze the flud,
And without hurt or harme in fayth, quoth she, good.

She goyked vp, and to the heauen can cry:
O Jupiter of nature God and King,
I make an othe truly to thee, that I
This littell House shall ouer this water bring,

This

**This othe was made, the Mouse without perceiuing,
The false engine of this foule carping Pad,
Toke threede, and bound hir legge as she hir bad.**

**Then foote for foote, they lap both in the brym,
But in their mindes they were right different,
The Mouse thought of nothing, but for to swim,
The Paddock for to drowne set his intent,
When they in midway of the streame nere went,
With all hir force the Paddock pressed downe,
And thought the Mouse without mercy to drowne.**

**Perceyuing this, the Mouse on hir can cry,
Traytour to God and forsworne vnto me,
Thou tokest vpon thy faith, right now, that I
Without hurt or harme, should ferried be and free,
And when she sawe, there was but do, or dee,
Withall hir might, she forst hir selfe to swim:
And pressed vpon the Todes back for to clim.**

**The dread of death, hir strength made increas,
And forced hir defende with might, and mayne,
The Mouse vptward: the Paddock downe can pres,
Whyle to, whyle fro, whyle drownd vp againe,
This silly Mouse plunged into great payne,
Can fight as long as breath was in hir breast,
Till at the last she cried for the priest.**

**Fighting thus together, the kight late on a twist,
And to this wretched battell toke good heede,
And with a whiske, or any of them wist,**

He clenched his talens betwixt them on the threede,
 So to the lande he flew with them good speede,
 Glad of that catch, piping with many pew:
 So lowled them, and without pity flew.

Then bowelled them that butcher with his bill,
 And belly drawn full feately them he fleede,
 But all their flesh, would scant be half a fill,
 And guttes also vnto that greedy gleede.
 Of their debate thus when I heard the reede,
 He took his flight and ouer the fieldes flew,
 If this be not true, then aske of them that saw.

Moralitie.

My brother if thou wilt take aduertence,
 By this fable thou may perceyue and see,
 It passes farre all kinde of pestilence,
 A wicked minde fraught with wordes fayre and see,
 Beware therefore with whome thou matchest thee,
 For thee were better go to carte and plow,
 And all thy dayes to delue in wet and drie,
 Than to be matched with a wicked fellow.

A false intent vnder a fayre pretence,
 Hath caused many an innocent to die,
 Great folly it is to giue ouersone credence,
 To all that speakes fayzely vnto thee,
 A silken tong, an heart of cruelty,

Smites more soze than any shot of arrow,
 Brother if thou be wise, I red thee flee,
 To match thee with a fained forward fellow.

I warrant thee also, it is great negligence,
 To bind thee fast, where thou were franke & free,
 When thou art bounde, thou can make no defence,
 To saue thy life, nor yet thy libertie.

This simple counsel brother take of me,
 And it to comne forth both early and late,
 Better without strife, to liue alone we see,
 Than to be matched with a wicked mate.

This holde in mind, right moze I shall thee tel,
 What by these beastes may be fygurate.
 The Paddocke vsing in the floud to dwel,
 Is mans body, swimming rare and late,
 In this wretched world with cares implicate,
 Now hy, now low, whiles pliged vp, whiles down,
 Continually in peril, and ready for to drowne.

Now dolorous, now glad as byrde on breere,
 Now in freedome, now wrapped in distresse,
 Now hole and sound, now dead & brought on beer,
 Now poze as Job, now rolling in riches.
 Now gownes gay, now ragges laide in presse,
 Now full as pease, now hungry as the hounde,
 Now hoyft on wheele, now thrown vpon y ground.

The Morall Fables

This litle mouse, here knit thus by the thyn,
The soule of man betoken may indeede,
Bounben, and from the body may not win,
While cruel death come breake of life the threede,
The which to dyoton shoud euer stand in dread
Of carnall lust, by the suggestion,
Which drawes the soule continually a downe.

The water is the world aye weltering
With many waues of tribulation:
In which the soule and bodie be stirring
Standing right different in their opinion,
The soule vpwarde, the body preaces downe,
The soule right faine would be brought oze ywis,
Out of this world, into the heauens blisse.

The Kight is death, that cometh sodainely,
As doth a theef, and endeth soone the battell:
Be vigilant therfore, and still ready,
For mans life is brickle and aye mortall.
My friend therfore make thee a strong wall,
Of faith in Christ: for death wil the assay,
Thou knowst not when, euen morrow or midday.

Adew my friend: and if that any aske
Of these fables, so shortly I conclude,
Say thou I left the rest, vnto the learneds taske,
To make example, and some similitude.

Now

of Esope the Phrygian.

Now Christ for vs that died on the rood,
Of soule and life, as thou art sauour,
Graunt vs to passe into a blessed houre.

Finished in the vale of Aylesburie the thirteenth
of August, Anno Domini, 1574.

THE EPILOGVE.

BEhold ye men) Esope that noble clerke
Although of body yformed swondrous ill,
His fables wrote with wisdom deep and darke
To stir our mindes (to good which had no skill)
By beasts and foules, he spake to swaine vs still,
As fowle, Wolfe, Sheepe, dog, cocke and henne,
To stirre our mindes to liue on earth like men.

His writ of olde by authors that are past,
That Esope was crooke backt, great belly & head,
Crooke legged, splay foote, & like a Coswe in wast.
Yet vertuous of his life, as it is sead,
Whose good examples liue though he be dead,
In ech mans mouth, and shall do still for aye.
No vertue brings forth fruite without decay.

Thus as ye heare ill shapen of his body,
Yet of his minde none perfecter then he:
But mark his Sayes, and ye finde him no noddy,
But perfect aye, as perfect loe may be,
Who lendes you light good vertuous wayes to see.
Then loue this worke, and and reade it at your will,
I but eclipse his tales of so great skill.

FINIS.

